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MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. T. N. TOLLER.

(Continued from p. 454.)

THE following is the address of the Benevolent Society:

"Rev. and dear Sir,—We, the undersigned members of the Benevolent Society, have heard, with concern, of the repeated invitations you have received, and of the efforts that have been made to remove you from Kettering; but it is with most heartfelt satisfaction that we have also heard of your determination still to remain amongst us. We beg leave to assure you of our cordial attachment to your ministry, and of our respect and esteem for your person. We present you our most grateful acknowledgments for this proof of your regard to your congregation, in rejecting pecuniary offers much larger than any which can be made by the people now under your charge. We hope that the present attempts to remove you, will only more firmly unite you to an unanimous and affectionate people, who consider it one of their greatest privileges, that Providence has placed over them one who has so long satisfactorily, and, in many instances, beneficially, filled the pastoral office. We are certain, that a separation betwixt you and the congregation at Kettering, would be felt by the people at large with the most heart-rending regret; but to us, who have no recollection of the tender regard, warm addresses, and affectionate prayers of any other pastor, such a separation would be peculiarly painful. We do then most heartily rejoice

that it is not likely to take place. We cannot let this opportunity pass, without rendering you our unfeigned thanks for the anxious solicitude for the welfare of the younger part of your congregation, so often expressed in your addresses in general, and in your New Years' Sermons in particular. May long and increasing usefulness amongst us be your lot here; and we are certain that the reward of a good and faithful servant awaits you hereafter."

From the young people of the congregation, Mr. T. received the following address:

"Our honoured Pastor,—Impressed with a deep sense of your usefulness and ability, the young people of your congregation in general, take the liberty of addressing you, to express their grateful sense of what, by the divine blessing, you have done for them; and their hope, that your labours of love may long be continued among them. At a time when public calamity presses on the minds of many, with great weight, the consolations of religion are peculiarly dear; and these consolations come from you in a manner well suited to our feelings. Many, who are walking in difficult paths, look forward to their Sabbaths as the season of refreshment and comfort. We know that, by your attention to us, you give up some advantages, and some pleasures, which are congenial to your understanding and taste; but we would hope

that this sacrifice may, in some measure, be compensated by the consciousness you enjoy of being, through divine grace, the means of conversion to some, of great usefulness to many others, and a blessing to the town at large, as well as to the society over which you preside. Your people are poor. We have little to offer you, but affectionate hearts, and many fervent prayers, that your labours may be owned and blessed by the great Head of the church; that your health may be established, and your life continued. May you never leave us till you have finished your Master's work on earth, and are called to enter into the joy of your Lord! May you enter the divine presence surrounded by multitudes of spiritual children, ready to bear their joyful testimony to your faithfulness and honest zeal."

This address was signed by 116 persons.

The address of the congregation in general was as follows:

"Rev. and dear Sir—We, whose names are under-written, impressed with a sense of the divine goodness in placing you amongst us, beg you will permit us to say how much we rejoice to find, that, though overtures, far exceeding any that we can make, have been made you, yet you have generously declined them, and have still preferred 'dwelling among your own people,' a people who, while they greatly lament before God that they have not been more fruitful under such cultivation as they have received, yet hope that they are not deceiving themselves or you, when they declare, that your labours have been blessed to much usefulness among them; particularly by the impressions which have been made, in many instances, on the minds of the younger part of your auditory; by the consolations you have administered to the poor in their afflictions; and by your instrumentality

in preserving that peace and unity which have so long prevailed in the congregation, as well as by the securing of many other important objects of the Christian ministry. Your labours have been highly acceptable, and have secured the most cordial esteem; and therefore your removal from us would have been a subject of the deepest regret. You well know that we are not wealthy; but we offer you, what we are satisfied you will esteem more valuable than a large salary, our most affectionate regards.

"With an ardent desire that nothing but the common lot of man may separate us, we sincerely pray, that, when you have finished the work your great Master has allotted you on earth, you may receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away."

To this address there were upwards of 530 signatures.

To these addresses, Mr. Toller, on Sabbath afternoon, March 16, 1800, at the close of a sermon from Psalm lvii. 4. "He shall choose our inheritance for us," returned the following answer, which, on account of the manly good sense, the ardent affection for his people, the noble disinterestedness and simplicity of spirit, the unaffected humility, and genuine piety, which it discovers, cannot fail of being highly gratifying to our readers.

"Twenty-four years ago I came to this place, under considerable and peculiar disadvantages, arising from extreme youth, inexperience, and the then critical and disjointed state of the congregation. I entered on the station with fear and trembling, and with scarcely a peradventure of being able to give any general or lasting satisfaction. During this interval, I have gone through many trying afflictions, some of which you have known, and others of the most trying you have never known. I have many

faults to remember this day before God—much coldness of heart, many neglects of duty, and much unfruitfulness in my office. But I will always do you the justice to say, that I have no injuries from you to enumerate, no personal ill behaviour from a single individual, during all this time, to complain of. And if you had all treated my great Master with a regard proportioned to that which I have received from you, I should have been the happiest, the most blessed minister on earth.

“With all my imperfections, I trust I am conscious of supremely aiming to speak to you the words of truth and soberness; and I am not conscious of the predominance of a restless discontented spirit, or of seeking great things for myself. I have had my gloomy hours—many of them, and have felt many distressing anxieties, both respecting myself and many individuals here, for whose souls I cannot but care. Sometimes I have thought another person might be found, who would be more suitable to this congregation, and fill this particular station to better purpose. On this ground, principally, I have sometimes wished to make way for a successor; but I never either sought for another situation, or peremptorily desired it. The late invitations have been entirely unprocured and unsought on my part. I consider it an illustrious display of the divine goodness to me, and desire solemnly and publicly to give all the honour to the providence and grace of God, that, after the trial and experience of nearly twenty-four years, and amidst the many imperfections of which I am conscious, some of which you must have discovered, your affectionate regard continues undiminished. The unanimous resistance which, by your strong and unequivocal expressions of attachment, you have given to the efforts made to remove me, amounts with

me to an explicit voice from God, commanding my continuance. If I had been more disposed to hesitate than I really was, the spirit of your addresses would have determined me at once. Whatever I may be called to suffer, may I never be permitted “to fight against God.” And to have broken through such cords of love, would have amounted to little short of it. I can truly say, I hope the possessing the hearts of so many of my fellow creatures and fellow Christians, stands for more with me than many thousands of gold and silver, and that nothing, in this connexion, makes me so uneasy, as an humbling consciousness of not filling this station to better purpose.—‘Brethren, pray for me.’ I cannot help remarking, that, while I have received great satisfaction from your addresses, as coming from the congregation at large, it gave me peculiar pleasure to find that so great a number of poor people had subscribed them. To the poor, blessed be God, the Gospel is preached. To them I think it a peculiar honour and happiness to address it. It is no small encouragement to me to see the aisles, and other parts of the house, filled by the poor; nor is it the least acceptable part of your addresses where you say, that the pains I have taken for their consolation, have been affectionately received, and have not been altogether in vain.

“The number of the poor has not more sensibly gratified me, than the respective addresses and signatures of my young friends. And I have found my mind not a little refreshed by the peculiar strength of attachment they express. I consider the younger part of my hearers as the hope of the rising age. With them rests, under God, our expectancies with respect to the future church; and I am particularly anxious to acquire their confidence, command their attention, and deserve their

affections. In this age of scepticism, I have made a point of taking all opportunities of laying before them the convincing evidences of our holy religion, and of guarding them against the spreading poison of infidelity. And if my labours are blessed to succeed with a goodly number of my young friends, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.

" The circumstance of one of the addresses coming from a benevolent society, composed entirely of young persons, whose whole aim is doing good, and rendering assistance to the distressed and afflicted poor, gives me reason to hope I have not inculcated Christianity on them in vain. May they go on and prosper! May their number be increased! May they be actuated by the purest Christian principles, enjoy harmony among themselves, and the rich luxury of being a blessing to others!

" I heartily wish and pray that the late events may be blessed to produce their true effect on us all, to stir us up to more thorough attachment to the genuine principles of religion, to a more regular attention to its ordinances, and a more diligent cultivation of its spirit, that we may be striving together for the faith of the Gospel, and that we may anticipate the approach of that day, when sowers and reapers, when pastors and people, the past, the present, and the future, shall all rejoice together through a blessed eternity. Amen."

Few persons, whatever may be their particular sentiments respecting the duty of ministers with regard to changing their situations, will withhold their commendation from Mr. Toller, for the part he acted in this affair. Two, in particular, of the excellencies of his character shine forth conspicuously on this occasion—his superiority to avaricious motives,

and his humility. He was then, comparatively, a young man. He had before him the possibility, perhaps the probability, of a large family; and yet a great augmentation of salary was so far from being to him an *irresistible allurement*, that it scarcely proved a *temptation*. It seems not to have made the least impression on his mind. It evidently hardly cost him an effort to resist the pecuniary offers which were made him. How desirable is such a disposition for a minister of the Gospel! How much will it contribute to his peace, and enable him to discern the path of duty in cases like that which we have been stating! And with how much propriety may such a man exclaim, from Sabbath to Sabbath, " Love not the world, neither the things of the world." What a consolation to the worldling, what an opiate to his conscience, when he can reply to such exhortations as the preceding, " Physician, heal thyself!" Prove by your conduct that you are in earnest, and then perhaps I may follow your advice. The same noble superiority to the love of money marked Mr. T.'s conduct on other occasions. He was far from being a *fortune-hunter*. He could exercise a practical dependence on Providence; and facts have proved, and doubtless will prove, that he did not lean on a broken reed.

The preceding statement also manifests his humility. He was far from having those high ideas of himself, which would have induced him to fear that his talents would be lost in Kettering, a comparatively small town, (we cannot call it obscure, connected as it is with the names of Fuller and Toller, and the Baptist Mission,) that nothing short of a station in some large city, if not in the metropolis of the kingdom, was worthy of his abilities. It is really amusing, as far as amusement can be indulged

in such a connexion, to hear some spruce aspiring young academicians, whose abilities, after they had been cultivated for half a century, would not equal his when he first ascended the pulpit, talk very significantly of their having 'no objection to spend a few of the first years of their ministerial course in the country, or in a village.' But to hint that they might spend their lives there, would be deemed almost an insult. They seem prodigiously afraid of burying their talents in an obscure situation—of not finding a sphere sufficiently elevated and extensive for their great powers. It might not be amiss for some of them to remember, that talents of a certain order, are as much in danger of being lost in the *publicity* of a large town, as in the *obscenity* of a small village.—A candle may be disregarded on account of the blaze of the meridian sun, as well as because it is put beneath a bushel. Besides, no man, unless he is destitute of something more valuable than the greatest mental abilities, can well be afraid that his talents will be lost in the Gospel ministry. The biographer of Horne Tooke, indeed, tells us, that the care of a parish did not afford sufficient employment for the great powers of that extraordinary individual. But this is a proof that neither the one nor the other knew what the care of a parish is, else they would not have thought any one more than sufficient for that office, concerning which the Apostle Paul exclaimed, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Perhaps there is no exaggeration in asserting, that the greatest man, in point of mind, that ever ascended a pulpit, might find ample employment in almost the obscurest station, where he had to "feed the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood." Besides, with the cultivation and the field which the ministry affords, talents will show themselves, and attract notice in

almost any situation. The fame of Augustine, Bishop of *Hippo*, filled the Christian world, and will last, probably, till the end of time. Many of the Bishops of Rome and the Patriarchs of Constantinople, were disregarded while they lived, and quickly forgotten after their death. A beacon, even on a plain, will attract notice; while a taper, though on the top of a mountain, will still be obscure.

What pleasing ideas do the preceding addresses excite of the feelings of both minister and people towards each other; and, doubtless, what had transpired would powerfully contribute to strengthen those bonds of union which were already very far from being weak. It has sarcastically been said of Dissenters, that "division is their sin, and division is their punishment." If so, there are very many congregations to which the sin is not imputed, for the punishment is not inflicted; on the contrary, many of them exhibit the most pleasing specimens which are to be found on earth, of an enlightened, affectionate, intimate, moral union—of that union, which even those who think that other bonds, besides those of conscience and affection, are expedient, are even requisite, must allow is peculiarly proper for a church of Christ. It seems unaccountably strange that any considerations whatever should have influence sufficient to induce those who call themselves the minister of the Saviour, and the followers of the Apostles, to prefer lording it over their people, being raised to their station, and kept in it, by ecclesiastical and civil power, and laws, to being the "man of the choice of their congregations," and the object of their unconstrained attachment. It has been said, that the ministers of an establishment are independent of their people, and therefore need not regard them, or humour their prejudices; whereas Dissenters are dependent

on their hearers, and must conduct themselves so as to conciliate affection and gain esteem. Dissenters could easily point out a dependance in those who make this observation, which more than counterbalances their's: but if they were to admit the remark, in all its latitude and weight, what follows? That is a happy dependance, which fortifies human frailty against temptation, induces a kind of necessity to act a wise and virtuous part, and thus assists in securing an ascendancy, an influence, and a homage, which every wise and good man will prefer to all the power of the most haughty despot, to the servile flattery of ten thousand cringing slaves. "Edward wins our cities; but Philippa conquers hearts." Power and riches may force submission, but excellence gains affection. The divisions and contentions which sometimes occur among congregationalists, are often tauntingly thrown in their face, as proofs that their's is not the best, is not the scriptural, form of church government. They have many ways, which it is not necessary to mention here, of repelling the objections which these taunts imply. They can maintain that those cases of dissension are but exceptions to the general state of their churches. For every instance of discord, which is at all serious in its consequences, they can adduce a hundred, where concord and peace reign. But strife and contention are noisy and turbulent; stormy days, though few in reality, appear many. They arrest universal attention, and perhaps are marked in the calendar; whereas weeks of serenity and sunshine pass almost unnoticed. Peace and affection are modest and silent. They may, almost unnoticed, exist to a large extent, and for a long period. A year of active warfare will make a greater figure in the page of history than a century of profound peace. Dis-

senters could also easily retort the objection to which we have just now alluded. Let there be taken an equal number of societies in each community, and, were it lawful to suspend an object of so much importance on such a proviso, we could undertake, under pain of being obliged, if unsuccessful, to relinquish the interest of dissent, to point out as many instances of discord among our opponents, as they can amongst us. And we have no objection to extend the observation to religious controversies, and to examine, in both cases, the causes and consequences. "Physician heal thyself," is a retort which many would do well to consider, before they either engage in the work of censure, or make an attempt to heal others.

What a blessing was it to Mr. Toller that he was connected with a society which knew how to appreciate his worth, and to repay his generous attachment. In this respect, at least, the people were worthy of the minister. And Mr. T. was fully sensible of his happiness. We have already seen that he "publicly and solemnly" gave thanks "to the providence and grace of God" for the long continuance of their affectionate regard. He doubtless recollects that he might have been situated where some Diotriches, loving and determined to have the pre-eminence, blind to all the excellencies of any minister, and indeed to every thing but his own importance, practically accounting as less than nothing such passages of scripture as the following—"Obey them who have the rule over you, and submit yourselves"—"Know them who are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake"—would have rendered unavailing all his efforts to gain the love and secure the harmony of his church and congregation; would have caused him to sigh for a re-

moval: or that his lot might have been cast where the "thick-skinned monster of the mud and the slime, which no weapons can pierce, no discipline can tame,"* would have perpetually annoyed him; where some towering professors, soaring so high in the regions of speculation, that they leave far behind them the pleasant, fruitful, vallies of practice, and that amidst the tenuity of the air they evidently derive little benefit from the warmth of the sun of righteousness—professors who are much better acquainted, in their own conceit, with the decrees of God, than they are in reality with the commands and invitations, with the plainest statements of the Bible; who find no difficulty in those awful, inscrutable purposes of Jehovah, which made an apostle exclaim, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." These would have disregarded all his labours, would have kept, to the utmost of their power, a captious, speculating spirit alive in his congregation, and would have exclaimed, respecting every sermon,

* Hall.

however rich in important scriptural truth, however well adapted to the state of his auditory, if they could not find in it their own peculiar sentiments, expressed in their own cant terms, "This is not the Gospel;" "there is nothing here to comfort the *dear people* of God." Or he might have been stationed where some proud worldly religionist, determined to relinquish neither his profession nor his sins, bent on accomplishing what the Saviour himself has pronounced impossible, the serving of God and mammon; unable to bear the delineation of his own character, and to keep his conscience easy amidst the searching light and rousing appeals of faithful preaching, would have rendered the life of any minister bitter amidst even pleasing tokens of usefulness, and the general respect and love of his people. Even Mr. T., well calculated as his temper and conduct were to conciliate and secure esteem, would not have found every place a Kettering, nor every congregation like that which he with so much propriety denominated "his own people."—(To be continued.)

SHORT DISCOURSES FOR FAMILIES, &c.

[The following Discourse by the late Mr. Toller, was taken down in short hand by a friend many years ago. It is, therefore, not inserted here as a finished production from the pen of the Author himself, but as one of his ordinary Pulpit Exercises, taken from his lips. The friend who communicates it, promises several others, by the same eloquent and excellent Preacher.]

NO. XXIX.

GOD'S CONDESCENSION TO THE HUMBLE AND CONTRITE.

Isaiah lvii. 15.—"Thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

THIS may justly be called one of the most magnificent passages in

the whole Bible. It gives one such views of God as no man could originally have conceived, if he had not been divinely inspired and taught of God himself. I shall not attempt so much to enter into its contents, as to enlarge on a thought which struck my own mind in connexion with these words.—While the nature and works of God convey the most magnificent and awful views of him, it seems as if God's main intention in his word, is to soften and familiarize that greatness to our minds, and by its blessed discoveries to embolden our hope and encourage our love. This two-

fold representation of God is the most desirable mercy we can possibly receive. If there is a God, his nature must be what it is represented in these sublime sentences; he can be but *one* :—can have no rival. If there is a God, the essence and manner of his being must be beyond that of every other kind of being—**THE HIGH AND LOFTY ONE.** If there is such a being, he must be as represented here—*the inhabitant of eternity*—there can be but just room enough in eternity itself to comprehend him. If there is a God, his rectitude must be, strictly speaking, perfect—*whose name is holy*. Rectitude and perfection must run through his whole *essence, ways, and works*, without a spot, and without a flaw.

What is the seeming design of this, but to place him at an immeasurable distance from us. It seems as if there could be no intercourse between such a being as this, and such beings as we are.—Here steps in *the word of God* to soften the splendour of his greatness—we have his own testimony in his word, which throws a sweet and sacred mildness about his throne, that his radiance may not be too much for us. “*Thou saith the high and lofty one.*” &c. Though these are just views of myself, yet, while I dwell in the high and holy place, I dwell with him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit. This is the meaning.—I shall endeavour

I. To illustrate the thought I set out with, and then

II. Make some remarks on the spirit and import of the text:

I. To illustrate the thought I set out with.

Surely I need not take up much time in illustrating that sentiment. Every one, who only thinks, must feel its truth. But the nature of God is such, in vastness and extent, as to confound our faculties:

it is like wading through the deepest ocean to attempt to comprehend him. Yet there are certain great things which we plainly see must be true. If there is a God he must be one in essence: the high and lofty *one*. He must be an infinite, all-perfect being. There can be but one God, any more than one infinite space, or one eternity. If there is a God, he must be beyond all other kind of beings—the *high and lofty one*. His nature must be exceeding all other, on this principle, that the supreme cause must exceed in a way infinitely beyond the effect of that cause. The creatures, however excellent, must be far below the Creator, at whose will they were formed, and on whose will they depend. If there is a God, there can be no part of space, no period of duration, out of his reach, or beyond his duration.

Though our thoughts are extinguished entirely in contemplating a duration never begun, and that shall never end, yet there can be no mystery in this to God; because his being must reach from everlasting to everlasting. It must be as easy for him to grasp the ages of eternity, as for us to number the minutes that make up an hour. “A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.”

If there is a God, there can be no flaw in his attributes or character; he dwells in the *holy place*. He can have no mean ends to answer, no unworthy schemes to accomplish, no low disposition to gratify: his nature raises him above these, as naturally as the heavens keep their distance from the earth. No narrowness in his views, no change in his intentions, no unfaithfulness in his schemes, or failure in the execution of his purposes. Poor creatures as we feel ourselves to be, yet when we

can get above the world, we feel these things must be true, though we cannot tell how.

These views of the grandeur of the nature of God, and this magnificence of being are supported by what we can see of his works. The divine productions of his hand correspond to this view of his nature.

When we hear loud peals of thunder roar over us, realise the force of wind and lightning, see the firmness of the rocks, the stateliness of the trees; we cannot help thinking the creator of all these must be just such a being as he is represented. Nothing more powerfully enforces these views upon us than a bright midnight-scene. I hardly ever look up on a clear star-light night, without a degree of amazement of soul. I see over me a boundless expanse, in which I let my imagination go where it will, but it is soon overpowered and tired. I see ten thousand glittering objects, which probably are worlds like this. I am lost in beings and in worlds. I see this grandeur corresponds to the great things that are said in this book of God. I can hardly help addressing myself to these unreachable regions; Who and what are you? Who built and who upholds these floating globes? Yet distant and immeasurable as you appear, you form but an *apartment*, a *corner* of his empire; *all* lie in the *hollow* of his hand; all seem as the dust under his feet. Who, and what must the Creator himself be? What his nature? If the creation be thus wondrous fair,

"Thyself how wondrous then!"

The manner in which the affairs of providence are conducted, those at least which come within our own notice, support the same magnificent views. How God sweeps away whole generations, and raises up new ones; confounds empires; baffles the counsels of statesmen! How he sends whole armies to the

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grave; bows a *nation* as one man! how he causes the earth to run its annual round, and appear in the different dress of the seasons to the thousands of its inhabitants! We see here the vastness of a God. To a person who has any soul at all, there is a solemn pleasure in losing one's-self in these views; a kind of sublime satisfaction in being buried in these thoughts. In another sense, these views seem to shut us out from God's notice, as if our insignificance and unworthiness placed us at an eternal distance from him; as if we could no more suppose such a one as I could occupy any care in the divine mind—any more than a little insect on a distant shrub, could interest a prince on his throne, surrounded with courtiers and guards, and superintending affairs of state.

To relieve us from these impressions, God himself steps in, and speaks as if no other person could satisfy us. He speaks himself. "All this is true of me—I dwell on high—but don't think my greatness confines me there, or my grandeur such as to separate me from my creatures: though I dwell in the high and holy place, &c. yet with him also who is humble and of a contrite spirit." It seems one great object and intention of the word of God to inculcate this thought, that though very great things may be said of God, this is not intended to drive us from our maker; though every thing great, there is no particle of pride, no haughtiness, no affected greatness. If any of his creatures are displeasing to him, it is those who affect to be what they are not; "the proud he knoweth afar off;" but to the lowly soul, who is willing to be a dependant creature, who is willing to lie at his feet as a dependant sinner, all this majesty is softened by the most endearing gentleness and love; all the God brought down to the humble heart.

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But in order to inculcate and keep up this view, God has thus thought proper to apply to himself those kind of characters which, among men, are most familiarly known, and most expressive of mildness of attachment. What can be more humble and simple than the connexion between a shepherd and his sheep. God has authorised a mortal man like ourselves to use such language as this : “ The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want,” &c. What more intimate than the connexion between a father and his children, or stronger than a father’s disposition towards his offspring? Yet God has authorised his servant to say, “ As a father pitieith his children, so the Lord pitieith them that fear him.” “ Come out and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my *sons and daughters*, saith the Lord Almighty.” What can go greater lengths in softness of affection and steadiness of attachment, than the tenderness of a mother to the babe at her breast? Yet God hath used these words : “ But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee.” Do we think highly of a character that forgives an injury? Is it the greatest stoop of condescension to receive an offender without punishing? Hear what the Lord says, Jer. xxxi. 20 :—“ Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still, and I will surely have mercy on him, saith the Lord.” But lest it should be possible mere declamation should be suspected, God has taken one astonishing step further. In a most important sense, he has actually come down among us in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in the form of a servant, being *found in*

fashion as a man. In the person of his son, he humbled himself; we are told Christ was God manifest in the flesh. His name was called Immanuel, for this reason, because *God with us.* He has styled himself a brother and friend, and veiled his glory in a body like ours, that his terrors might not make us afraid. He has said the most gracious things from his *own mouth*, and in our own language; for he took not on him the nature of angels but the seed of Abraham. Thus have I endeavoured to illustrate the sentiment, that while the nature and works of God give such grand views of him, it is the intention of his word to soften these views, and embolden our hopes. To encourage us he has assumed the most familiar names and titles.

I am to show that this twofold view of God is most suitable to, and desirable for us as sinners.

1. Because this view is perfectly consistent with Scripture, and gives us the most exalted conceptions of him. Among men it is considered an attendant on courtiers to be haughty; to keep inferiors at a distance; because we connect pride with human greatness. We always respect a fellow-creature in an exalted station, so much the more for condescending, provided he keep in character. This condescension exalts the man on the ground of perfect consistency. If it appears an essential of real grandeur to condescend, the same majesty which enables the supreme Being to fill the high and holy place, prompts him to condescend to the humble heart. Pride is the exercise of little minds;—not of the greatest mind of all. There cannot be a shadow of such a temper in him, it is below his nature. The sparrow does not fall on the ground without him, and the hairs of your head are all numbered.

This two-fold view of God is most desirable, and important to us, because,

2. It has a practical tendency

upon our minds. A kind of mild, soft, yielding fondness in a relative or friend we might be impressed by. Yet we consider this as a weakness. Human nature is apt to impose on such a spirit. It is the candid, manly principle which commands our respect. To such kind of creatures as we are, it is desirable God should be represented in his majesty and power, to preserve a proper awe upon our minds. I suppose most good people find this necessary. There is a danger of thinking too lightly of our Maker; therefore it is important to dwell on the grandeur of Deity, to keep us low, and to keep up a sense of our distance, meanness and wretchedness in ourselves. For this reason, among others, the Scriptures dwell on this view to keep the creature in his place, and repress irreverence. Mere greatness and severity of character and irresistibleness of power, and majesty of nature, drive the guilty to utter despair, and crush a dependent into despondency. The other view in the text is necessary to give such creatures as we are a particle of hope.

If a man realize his sinfulness and demerit, and look only to all this greatness, every affectionate feeling will be extinguished; all hope put out. The whole universe would appear a great prison of almighty power; our existence our heaviest curse. The first view is necessary to maintain our reverence, the latter to warm our love. Can all this majesty tabernacle with men, and become incarnate, and take his abode in the humble spirit? "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds."

3. This two-fold view of God is desirable, because it will be a satisfactory and complete answer to some of the most anxious inquiries which can agitate the heart of man.

I dare say some have thought,

how can it possibly be true, that God should so love a mean, and insignificant, and miserable world like this, so love, as to send his only begotten Son, that whosoever,—the meanest, most despicable, most miserable of the lowest of the sons of men,—whosoever believes on him should not perish. How can this be true? Because he is the high and lofty one. To him one man is no more insignificant than another; one world than a thousand worlds, and a thousand no more important than one; because a part of the grandeur of the Deity is to pity the fallen, have mercy on the miserable, revive the heart of the humble, and to revive the spirit of the contrite ones.

I dare say some have thought, how can it be, when such a poor creature as I, overwhelmed with distress and fear, go into my closet, and shut my door, and give vent to the fulness of my heart, that the groans of a poor individual should rise into the ears of the Lord of hosts, and expect any answer? Because he is the high and lofty one that inhabits eternity, in whose presence ten thousand archangels in the heaven of heavens are really no more than a mourning, groaning, struggling soul, in a cottage of dust; —because it is an essential part of his greatness to listen to contrite distress.

Behold the wonderful plan of grace in Christ! It is one of his favourite employments to lift the poor from the dunghill, to say to the fearful heart be strong: "in him the fatherless findeth mercy." Oh says the poor soul, what shall I do when God riseth up? If there is so much majesty and grandeur in God, how can I appear before him at last? How can I pass the valley of death with any composure, or stand before his tribunal with confidence and hope? Because he is the high and lofty one; because with him one world

is no more than another; death no more than life. He can so impress these views on you that it shall not be terrible. He can sooth and calm your mind at death, so that you shall lose the sense of awful grandeur, in the tenderness of the mild, dignified relation in which he stands to you, that you shall feel no more terror to change worlds, than a sheep at being conducted from one pasture to another by the shepherd's hand; or a child to be received by a smiling father from one part of his dwelling to another. There is no such thing as consternation and terror to the people of God, when they enter a world of spirits, any more than to a child when it comes into this world. They are prepared abodes—every thing will be adapted to the capacity of his people; every thing will be ready for their reception.

I dare not conclude without re-

marking, to the disobedient and enemies of God, who hate his being, his ways, and his laws, God is a *consuming fire*. That passage is awfully just, "Who knoweth the power of thine anger?" God is as dreadful to his enemies as he is represented. The Lord send this home to every heart that is against him. In what way God may employ his power to punish his enemies we cannot tell; but from what we see of what God can do in the world,—how he can make a man's sins a terror to himself when no arm touches him; we can tell it must be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. O, my friends, seek the Lord, while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; for his thoughts of mercy are not like our thoughts—nor his ways as our ways; but as high as the heaven is above the earth, so are his thoughts and ways above ours.

ORIGINAL ESSAYS, COMMUNICATIONS, &c.

ON REQUISITES TO THE
LORD'S SUPPER,
IN REPLY TO BEEZUHARY.

(July, pp. 353—360.)

I do not perceive any difference of opinion, in this controversy, respecting the conduct of the apostles at Jerusalem, as described, Acts ii. 41, 42. That they administered baptism to all who gladly received their word, and that they administered the Lord's Supper to all whom they *then* baptized, seems to be universally admitted. Hence it is inferred, on one part, that all who gladly received the doctrine of the Gospel, when baptized, were *entitled* to participation in the Lord's Supper; because, otherwise, the 3000 at Jerusalem were admitted, without being entitled, to partake of it: and as there appears no ground to suppose that any were baptized by the apostles

and disciples of Christ, who did not gladly receive their doctrine, excepting *children* of those who did so, it follows, that all *adult* persons baptized by them, *were* admitted to the Lord's Supper.

This, nevertheless, is disputed, in your July number, p. 353, on the ground that there is no evidence of those whom our Lord's disciples baptized at the commencement of his ministry, having ever been admitted to the sacred supper. This is true; and it is equally so, that there is no evidence to the contrary. We can only judge from analogy and probability. I apprehend, that if they gladly received the doctrine of the apostles, they would be admitted to the Lord's Supper, without being re-baptized. To reckon them an "immense multitude," appears to me erroneous. The disciples of Christ, during a

short abode in Judea, baptized more than John, in *that* interval, baptized at Enon ; not, more than he *ever* had baptized. But whatever was their number, or their subsequent conduct, it makes no difference respecting those whom the apostles and disciples of Christ baptized, according to the commission which he gave them, shortly before his ascension. It is asserted, indeed, that "Simon Magus was baptized, but *not* received to the Lord's table," (p. 354) : but there is not a shadow of scriptural authority, or of moral probability, for the assertion. I cannot conjecture the ground of it. Simon betrayed that "his heart was not right with God," by offering to purchase (not admission to the Lord's Supper, nor even miraculous gifts, but) apostolical authority. "Give me also," said he, "this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." This was the peculiar privilege of an apostle, and was not possessed by Philip. Peter answered Simon, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter ; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God : repent therefore," &c. The *eleven* partook of this power, by Christ's previous appointment, (Mark xvi. 15—18) ; but they had not authority to extend it to others ; therefore, when two candidates for the apostleship had been nominated, they cast *lots* between them, praying, "Thou, Lord, who knowest the *hearts* of all, shew which of these two thou hast chosen." Acts i. 15—26. The evident state of Simon's *heart*, therefore, utterly disqualified *him* to have part or lot in this matter. Whether he was excluded from the Christian community at Samaria, or his intreaty for the intercession of the apostles was accepted as a token of his repentance, we are uninformed, (Acts viii. 12—24) : but as he had believed, was baptized, and had continued with

Philip, there appears no reason to surmise, that he had not, with the other Samaritan converts, received the Lord's Supper, after their baptism, as those at Jerusalem are recorded to have done. That such a statement was not repeated, by no means implies the contrary ; for it is comparatively seldom that even the *baptism* of converts is recorded. It is added, "Saul, immediately after his conversion, was baptized by Ananias, but was refused communion with the disciples at Jerusalem, because they had not sufficient proof of his conversion," &c. To this unaccountable representation, no other answer is needful, than the words of Scripture : "They were all *afraid* of him, and believed not that he was a *disciple*."

I do not see, therefore, how it can reasonably be disputed, that all adults, baptized by the apostles and disciples of Christ, participated of the Lord's Supper : but supposing this, it is said, that "the ground of claim to the Supper was never rested upon the *fact* of baptism, but upon the supposed possession of that *spiritual regeneration* of which baptism was but the sign," (*ut supra*). To this, the reply is obvious, that whatever may be supposed to have been requisite to the Lord's Supper, it was equally requisite to baptism. If admitted to baptism, they were admitted also to the Lord's Supper, and not else. If the possession of *spiritual regeneration* was supposed to be needful to a participation of the Lord's Supper, it was supposed to be equally needful to the baptism of adults. There is no scripture evidence whatever, that any *additional* qualification, *after* baptism, was needful for the Lord's Supper ; or that any delay intervened, to *admit* of the acquisition. Those who were baptized, "continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

So Justin Martyr, (the earliest writer on the subject,) in the following century, relates, that the baptized were immediately conducted to the place of assembly; and, after prayer and mutual salutation, partook of the Eucharist. (First Apology, § 86). It was the same in all the succeeding centuries. That the Moravians (and perhaps other modern sects) delay the administration of the Lord's Supper to converts from heathenism whom they have baptized, is (I believe) wholly an innovation.

It remains, therefore, only to be examined, whether "that spiritual regeneration of which baptism was but the sign," was "supposed to be possessed" by all adults that were admitted to *baptism*. If not, it was not required for the Lord's Supper. If it was so, it was equally requisite to *both* these ordinances of Christ. What the sacred Scriptures state is, that when Peter had preached the Gospel to the multitude at Jerusalem, "then they that gladly received his word were baptized." The question therefore is, whether "gladly receiving the word" proved them to possess "spiritual regeneration." This, on the one part, is denied; because our Lord, in his parable of the sower, compares those who received the word with gladness or joy, but afterwards fell into temptation, to the stony ground, on which the good seed withered. The respondent calls this "a solitary case," p. 356; but I know not why. Of the *four* cases described by our Lord, there is only *one* that can, I apprehend, represent "spiritual regeneration;" namely, that of the seed falling on good ground, and bringing forth more or less abundantly. In the other *three* cases there was *no* produce; and the stony ground is *one* out of the *three*. I fear that few instances are to be found, in which the Gospel becomes effectual to the salvation of more than one out of

four of those who hear it: and after a pretty long and large opportunity of observation, I apprehend those who gladly hear the word, but do not produce good fruit, to form a full proportion of the remainder. It is argued, however, that, "in constructive evidence, each proof being taken apart, might be called no proof, because not a perfect or satisfactory one; yet when all the parts of such evidence are viewed together, they are denominated the complete evidence; and every one of the considerations, admitted into the body of such evidence, is properly called a proof." p. 355. "It would be a strange kind of spiritual regeneration, in which this glad reception of the Gospel should be lacking."—"Instead of saying, that to receive the word gladly *is not* a proof of spiritual regeneration, I think it would have been more consistent with reason, and with Scripture, to say, on the contrary, that it *is* a proof, the *very first* in the chain, as essential as any other, and that without which no other could be satisfactory."—"It was received by the apostles and disciples of Christ as all the evidence the circumstances of the converts allowed." *Ibid.*

I am far from objecting to the view here taken of the evidence of spiritual regeneration, as *accumulative*; and whether the whole, or every part of it distinctly, should be called a *proof*, is merely a verbal difference: but I must insist, that the several parts of the evidence become proofs only by mutually confirming each other; and that no one of them, by itself, or insulated from the rest, would be any proof at all of the fact in question. Ananias and Sapphira must have received the word gladly, else they would not have been admitted into the church at Jerusalem: but this was no proof of their spiritual regeneration. Others,

after gladly receiving the word, "by patient continuance in well-doing sought eternal life;" and, therefore, afforded complete and satisfactory evidence of their spiritual regeneration. Unless they had done so, a glad reception of the word would have been no more proof of *their* regeneration, than of Ananias's or Sapphira's. When it is represented "as all the evidence the circumstances of the converts allowed," it seems necessary to add, "unless their baptism had been delayed." And why did not the apostles defer their baptism, till accumulative evidence should have furnished proof of their spiritual regeneration? *Must* they not have done so, if they had deemed spiritual regeneration *requisite* to baptism? And if they had deemed it requisite to the Lord's Supper, must they not, after administering baptism to those who gladly received the word, have deferred admitting them to the Lord's Supper, till such accumulated evidence could be furnished? They did *neither*: hence I infer, that they did *not* require proof of spiritual regeneration, in order either to baptism or to the Lord's Supper.

It is represented as "the *necessary converse* of this proposition, that the apostles "would have accepted into their fellowship, those of whom they conscientiously believed, that they were yet in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity." p. 359. But it is neither necessary to the truth of a proposition that its converse should also be true; nor is the proposition, that the apostles accepted to fellowship those whom they believed to be unregenerate, the converse of that which affirms them to have accepted those of whose regeneration they had no proof. I do not imagine that they would have baptized any one whom they did not judge, from appearance, to be sincerely de-

sirous to learn, and to observe, all things whatsoever Christ had commanded them. Matt. xxviii. 20. I do not conceive that persons who have been baptized in infancy should be admitted to the Lord's Supper, till such judgment of them can reasonably be formed; but I think that it should then be inculcated on them, as *one* of our Lord's commands. At the same time, I cannot regard this, *of itself*, as a proof of their spiritual regeneration; for I see no reason to doubt that the stony-ground hearers were sincere in their reception of the word, and their temporary adherence to it. I take them to have been enthusiasts, not hypocrites; and to have mistaken emotions of their natural affections, for spiritual regeneration: thus deceiving themselves, but not aiming to deceive others. This is very far from being now uncommon; and the whole tenor of the argument which I oppose, appears to me to be adapted to foster this error, and thereby to promote the exclusion of truly regenerate persons from the Lord's Supper, and the admission of unregenerate persons to it: consequently to have a directly contrary effect to that of preserving the purity of churches.

The preceding remarks, if just, sufficiently confute the terrible prognostications of what *must* result from relinquishing the demand for an avowal of private feelings, as a *sine quâ non* to participation of the Lord's Supper, which had been shown to be the whole *practical* difference. The declension of the old Nonconformist Churches, both Presbyterian and Congregational, (Dr. Watts's for instance,) may be otherwise completely accounted for; as may also the revival which has happily taken place in the latter denomination. Indeed, *what* community has multiplied equally with the Wesleyan Methodists, who admit to society indiscriminately all who evince a concern

for salvation, without considering this as any proof of their *regeneration*?

A paragraph on p. 360, betrays as gross mistakes in *rhetoric* and *moral philosophy*, as a sentence above quoted from the foregoing page, with respect to *logic*. It can only be by a *figure of speech* that God is said to be *love*. 1 John iv. 8, 16. I understand it to denote, that infinite *benevolence* is to be attributed to him. In the same Epistle, i. 5, he is similarly said to be *light*; denoting, I apprehend, that infinite *knowledge* (comprising "intellect, thought, and power") is *primarily* to be attributed to him. I do not perceive how *sensual* passions could be more clearly distinguished from other *human* passions, than in the note to p. 245 of your Magazine for last May. But to attribute any "affection of *human nature*" to *Deity*, otherwise than "by a *figure of speech*," seems to me utterly incompatible with what *physicians* term "a right mode of thinking." Less could not, I think, be said on such a subject; and more, if there were room for it, might be useless.

7th July, 1821. - INDAGATOR.

REMARKS ON AN OBJECTION TO THE EVIDENCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

THE objection to which the following remarks apply has its foundation in the *selection*, and comparative *fewness* of the witnesses of the resurrection. It was early started by the enemies of Christianity, and is indeed specious and plausible at first appearance; it is nevertheless capable of the most ample and satisfactory refutation.

There is something suspicious, says the objector, in the comparative secrecy of the alleged resurrection. Before his death, Christ was wont to appeal to public

miracles, in proof of his Messiahship; why then was his resurrection private, when it would have been easy for him, by a public appearance, to have irresistibly established his claims, and compelled even the most incredulous to believe? This looks like the expedient of impostors to avoid detection, rather than the appointment of the wise God, who, it may be justly supposed, would withhold no evidence which might have been given for an event at once so extraordinary and so important. Why should there be, in the present case, a *selection* of witnesses at all? And why should those alone be selected, who had been the previous associates of Jesus, who had been admitted into his designs, who had been employed in propagating his religion, whose interest it was to support their own and their Master's credit, and to assert the resurrection, as the foundation of that doctrine, which they subsequently preached? Do not these circumstances warrant the suspicion that the witnesses were chosen not of God, but of themselves and their confederates? *

In replying to this objection, it may be observed, *in the first place*, That the want of public testimony to the resurrection does not in the least invalidate the other evidence which does exist of the truth of the same fact. There remains the *evidence of the actual witnesses*, the eleven, and the five hundred brethren who saw him at once. The testimony of these men, persisted in amidst unparalleled persecution, and sufferings voluntarily submitted to, affords an argument for its own truth, so powerful as fully to counterbalance reasons for suspicion far more weighty than the objection supposes. Had our Lord performed one miracle only during his ministry, and that miracle in

* Horsley.

the presence of his disciples alone, their history would have presented facts not to be accounted for on any other hypothesis, than that they declared what they sincerely believed, and that what they believed was true. There remains, moreover, *the evidence arising from the other miracles* performed by Christ and his apostles. This proof, as Paley has remarked of the evidence for design in the works of nature, is in the strictest sense *cumulative*. Every miracle is a proof, independent of all others, that the agent is possessed of miraculous power. If the evidence for the reality of one miracle fails, the proof for others is unaffected by the failure: and there is this peculiarity in the case of miracles, that if the reality of one is successfully established, the truth of all others, to which the same miraculous character is ascribed by the agent, necessarily follows. No impostor can be entrusted with power to work even one miracle in support of his claims. Now the miracles which our Lord performed on other occasions, stand on the very same ground, as to evidence, on which the adversary thinks it would have been satisfactory had the resurrection been placed. He is, therefore, bound to give them credit; and the truth of the resurrection must be admitted along with them.

In the second place. The objection, it seems then, amounts to nothing more, in as far as positive evidence is concerned, than that the proof produced, in behalf of the resurrection, is *less than it might have been*. But does this warrant us to reject the proof actually presented? Is the want of a general testimony to destroy the evidence of those witnesses who have given their attestations? or is the comparative privacy of this miracle to annihilate the public testimony to innumerable other miracles? Surely not. It is the

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dictate both of common sense and sound philosophy, that the truth of any proposition must be estimated, not by the want of proof which it might have had, but by the evidence which it has: and on this obvious ground, that there may be a reason for withholding the additional proof we desire, but none for withholding our assent to that which has been given. There is scarcely any truth, but what is strictly demonstrative, for which we cannot imagine evidence greater than that which is extant. To exercise our ingenuity in this way, would be a proof, not of an acute or profound, but of a frivolous mind: the surest argument of a weak understanding, it has been most justly observed, is, not to feel the force of present evidence.

In the third place, the assumption that the privacy of the resurrection is a deduction from its evidence, is itself destitute of foundation, inasmuch as publicity would not have added to that evidence. The proof of this apparently paradoxical assertion will be stated afterwards.—Since, then, there is nothing of *positive* evidence on which the objection we are considering proceeds, its force amounts only to a *presumption*, from the peculiar circumstances of the miracle, that it was an imposture; in as much as a public appearance would have satisfactorily proved its reality, whereas secrecy was the necessary means for preventing the detection of a fraud.—Here, it must be *first* of all observed, that the complaint of the want of public testimony must be admitted with some limitation. Jesus was seen, not by the eleven only, but by *five hundred brethren* at once. He who imagines, on the one hand, that all these were imposed upon, must, we think, give up the idea that a more public appearance would have detected the imposition; for if the intimate friends of Jesus were de-

ceived, who, it may be asked, were qualified to discover the deception. To assert, on the other hand, that these five hundred agreed in imposing on others, and persisted in the deception to the last, in spite of suffering and persecution, is an alternative to which even the most determined enemies of Christianity do not seem willing to have recourse. Even with regard to the apostles, the charge generally brought by infidels is of enthusiasm and credulity, rather than of fraud: but to impute the latter to such a number as Christ appeared to besides the apostles, would be the highest absurdity.

Secondly, The additional evidence required was not necessary in order to any valuable purpose; the proof given is complete and satisfactory without it, and fully sufficient for the conviction of every honest mind. We have stated that proof in part already: the innumerable public miracles which our Lord and his apostles performed, every one of which possesses the attestation of that very evidence demanded in the present instance: the testimony of those who did witness the resurrection, accompanied, as it is, with all the circumstances which can concur to give credibility to testimony. They greatly exceed in number what has ever been esteemed sufficient, in courts of justice, in the most momentous causes. Their information, as to the fact of the resurrection, could not but be correct; they had, indeed, the same means of discovering whether Christ was alive after his crucifixion, as for ascertaining that he was ever alive before it; and they could be no more mistaken as to his identity, than they could doubt whether he was the same individual for ten days together during his life. Their veracity is attested by the probity of their general character, by the traits of honesty conspicuous in all that they did and

wrote, and by the unprecedented and incessant persecution they sustained on account of their testimony. The presumption, that the required evidence would have been given, if it could have been given, must, therefore, be allowed to have very little force, if it is shown that proof sufficient for the purpose of conviction has been afforded without it.

But more particularly, *in the third place*, the presumption arising from the peculiar circumstances of the miracle, will be obviated by considering the *reasons for privacy* arising out of the peculiar circumstances of the miracle. Let it be remarked, then, that a public appearance would not, by itself, have added to the evidence for the resurrection. With regard to other miracles, for example, the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, every one of the multitude assembled, by seeing the original supply of food, and eating of the miraculous abundance to which it was augmented, was capable of bearing the most satisfying testimony to the reality of the miracle; so that the proof was increased in proportion to the publicity. The case is widely different with regard to the miracle of the resurrection. In order to qualify any individual to bear availing testimony to Christ's appearance, two things, at least, are required to concur in his case; that he should have had a previous intimate knowledge of his person, and that this knowledge should have been a matter of public notoriety. Without the first, he could not bear testimony even to his own satisfaction; without the second, his witness would have very little weight with others. These qualifications concurred in the followers, and especially the Apostles, of Christ, and in very few others. They were intimately acquainted with the Saviour, and their intimacy was publicly known. It is very improbable that his person

was familiarly known to many besides. During the whole course of his public ministry, he journeyed continually from place to place, he was surrounded constantly by crowds of people, and these crowds changing as he changed his station: consequently, there was hardly any opportunity of gaining an exact knowledge of his person to any but those who constantly followed him, and these were his disciples. But again, supposing that others were qualified to recognise Christ, their qualifications could not be a matter of notoriety, and they could not, in consequence, satisfy others. There is a necessity, therefore, in the nature of things, in the first place, that the burden of testimony devolve upon individuals. The general testimony of a public multitude would have possessed no weight. Some would have believed, and some would have doubted; infidels would have despised the first, and triumphed in the second; just as we find they have already treated the faith of the five hundred brethren who believed, and the uncertainty of *some who*, we are told, *doubted*. Publicity would, therefore, to say the least, only have confused and weakened the evidence in question. The trust-worthy evidence of those who were qualified to bear witness, would only have been burdened by the doubts and contradictions of those who were not. There is a necessity, in the second place, that these individuals should be disciples of Christ. The reasons already given make this sufficiently evident. Besides, it is obvious from the consideration that no one would give his attestation to the truth of the resurrection, unless he had been so convinced by his own evidence as to become a disciple. But it may be asserted further, that a public appearance would have been attended with results precisely the opposite of

those ascribed to it; it would have elicited testimony against the resurrection, instead of convincing the whole world of its reality. Some even of Christ's own brethren doubted his resurrection; still more strong and general would have been the unbelief of the Jewish people, who had lately crucified him, and had cried, "his blood be on us and on our children," and who would have seen that they had imprecated awful vengeance on their heads if the resurrection from the dead had proved him to be a righteous person. And more powerful still were the reasons for opposition on the part of the Jewish rulers. Sooner than that the object of their unrelenting hatred, and persecution even to death, should be received as the risen and acknowledged Messiah, thereby defeating all their plots and covering them with the most atrocious guilt and deepest infamy,—sooner than this, every engine of craft and malignity and power would have been brought into action. There were false witnesses ready now, as formerly, to swear against the reality of the resurrection; and in short, no limits can be set to the devices of men who had the power of the nation at their disposal, who entertained the most determined malignity of purpose, and had almost every conceivable inducement to proceed to the utmost extremity of opposition. A public appearance would thus have given an opportunity for false witness, to say no more: testimony would have been set against testimony, and infidelity would have exulted at the uncertainty introduced into the evidence for the resurrection, by the very means which, it is said, would have removed all doubt. By restricting his appearance to the eleven and other brethren, the Saviour took away the possibility of such a circumstance; all that his enemies could say was, that they

had not seen him, and this was just what his adherents affirmed.

The only means of obviating these conclusions, which follow from the supposition of a public appearance, is, by conceiving new signs and miracles to be performed by Christ, in order to prove the reality of his re-appearance. The idea, indeed, carries absurdity in its very face. Could miracles be stronger proofs of divine power after, than before the resurrection? And would they not, in as far as we are concerned, rest on the very same evidence as former miracles, *public testimony*? To imagine such a thing would, therefore, amount only to a frivolous demand for proof which could, in the nature of things, be no stronger than that already given; like the Jews, who vainly required *a sign from heaven*, when thousands were exhibited on earth before their eyes. It would, moreover, be inconsistent with all our ideas of propriety and consistency, that Christ should have given such proof. It would have been, in fact, to recommence his ministry, to begin again that work, which he declared, on the cross, was finished. He left it to his Apostles to carry on that work, and for this purpose endued them with power from on high; he himself continuing, in his state of glorious exaltation, to *work with them*, confirming the word with signs following. These were as convincing proofs of his Messiahship when performed by them, as they would have been had the Saviour appeared in person. This was now altogether unsuitable. He had accomplished the work given him by the Father to do; he had concluded his testimony; he had once suffered, had been once offered to bear the sin of many; and he was to appear no more on earth in the same character; his time was come to ascend to his reward, to sit down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, no more to leave

that seat of glory till he should come the second time to judgment, and appear to those who wait for him without a sin offering unto salvation.

These latter considerations, we humbly think, are of a more tangible and forcible nature than those by which Bishop Horsley endeavours to show the impropriety and indecency of our Lord's renewing his intercourse with the world. Not that the impropriety of which the Bishop speaks is entirely destitute of foundation; the ingenious argument, however, by which he proves it, we are persuaded, is so. But this, if we enter upon it at all, must be the subject of future animadversion.

G. W.

ON CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

(To the Editors.)

THE title I have given to this paper, and to another or two which may follow it, involves a theme of considerable latitude, since it proposes to view the Christian under all the various and possible circumstances of life; and is of no inconsiderable moment, since the judicious or injudicious use of it may be productive of much comfort or misery to our own minds, and of much honour or discredit to the religion we profess. "The law of the wise is a fountain of life, and the tongue of the just as choice silver; but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness." A Christian made wise by long experience is fitted for great usefulness in the church and the world; he may comfort the mourners, direct the wandering, and succour the tempted; while the sublime subject, in the mouth of a prating fool, or a designing hypocrite, is like "a jewel of gold in a swine's snout." It is therefore of no small importance to ascertain the character of genuine experience, to establish its reality against those who

doubt or deny it, and to show the useful practical purposes it subserves.

Christian experience is often misunderstood, consequently misrepresented and abused. Experience means trial or proof obtained by experiment ; and still more properly the knowledge we derive from experiment. " O taste and see that the Lord is good. Come unto me, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he has done for my soul." Hence arises an important distinction : age in christian profession is not experience. Not every man who has lived a certain number of years, or passed through a certain number of stages, should be called *experienced*. Some men are fools in spite of years, and their grey hairs are their reproach. It is painful to reflect how many there are who have had ample evidence of the vanity of the world, and yet are not made wise by the things they have suffered. You will see the sinner sometimes dying a hundred years old ; and many a man, at three score and ten, reaching after the vain bubble of fame, or pleasure, or riches, which has so often eluded his grasp ; and what a humorous poet has observed of another class of triflers is applicable to them ; their's is the profitless toil

" Of dropping buckets into empty wells,
And growing old in drawing nothing up."

Many are old in the profession of Christianity, many skilful in discriminating its doctrines, but they are not experienced Christians ; they are ever learning, but they never come to the knowledge of the truth. A man may have visited all the universities and learned societies in the world, and not be so wise as he who never saw one ; and a professor may have read much, and heard much, and thought much, but he is only sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal, if he has gone no further. The Gospel, we are assured, ef-

fectually worketh in them that believe. It is a hammer to break in pieces, a sword to penetrate, seed to grow, an armour to put on, leaven to ferment. If these views are just, we shall easily derive from them a definition of Christian experience. It is the sensible operation of Christian principles on the heart of a believer, in all the varying frames of his own mind, and under all the painful or pleasing vicissitudes of life. Christian experience, then, ought to include the history of that warfare in the soul, which commences in conversion, when the slave of sin arises to break from his limbs the bonds of his vassalage, and which is continued until death approaches and dissolves the feeble fabric of this mortal body.

It will be readily admitted by most, probably by all, that when the grace of God first arrests a sinner, it finds him like a sheep, wandering ; like the prodigal, destitute ; like the poor Samaritan, stripped, and robbed, and wounded ; or like the serpent-bitten Israelite, dying : and so thorough is the change which divine grace intends to effect, that it is called a new birth, a new creation. The first step is to awake the sleeper, to revive the dead ; and this is done by the truth of God gaining access to his understanding and his heart. But when these new principles, new affections, and new desires, gain access to the inward man, they do not annihilate instantly the old man of sin. The darkness of night is not exchanged for the sudden brightness of day ; the barrenness of winter is not succeeded instantly by the richness of autumn ; there is first the blade, and then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear. And all this time the old nature remains. For, said Jesus, " that which is born of the flesh, is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." All that we inherit by

natural descent, and while in the flesh, is carnal, and consequently adverse to that which is born in us of the Spirit of God. Hence arises that strong, and, to worldly reason, inexplicable state of heart, described by Paul in the seventh of the Romans, particularly at the nineteenth verse. While these two natures exist together, there will necessarily be a striving for the mastery; "the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other." The young Christian, when first his dimmed vision is visited with the holy light of heavenly truth, and his cold, hard heart touched, melted, and warmed with a live coal from the altar of divine love, experiences ineffable delight. He resembles the cripple healed by Peter and John; he goes into the temple "walking, and leaping, and praising God." He imagines himself already in possession of the land flowing with milk and honey, and thinks little of the eager foe that will follow him, the scorching deserts he must pass, the fierce winds he must sustain, the proud and gigantic foes which will oppose every step of his march, and contest every inch of ground. But ere he has been long in the field, he learns how illusory were his first anticipations. The truths of religion become familiar, and lose their novelty; the duties of religion become (in a great degree) mechanical, and lose much of their interest. That vigor which at first seemed likely to be permanent, is now only occasional; and that exhilarating joy which the contemplation of religious subjects had excited, subsides into calm mediocrity, and at best is attended only by temperate enjoyments, or by occasional refreshments and revivals. If he is in the habit of self-examination, (and what Christian can live without it,) the hand of divine fidelity will unveil to him

those deformities he had overlooked, and that deceitfulness he had never suspected. He now begins to find that the demons of pride, self-will, and sensuality, are not to be exorcised by the transports of a first awakening. Though the garrison is dislodged from the citadel of his heart, yet hosts of enemies will be found in the secret dens of his imagination, and prepared to rush upon him from the ambuscades of the passions. Perhaps the discovery of these painful truths may have been made under circumstances peculiarly discouraging; and temptation, affliction, and adversity, may conspire to shake his confidence; and if they do not induce a suspicion of the reality of religion in general, will at least make him doubt his own sincerity. These discoveries in the genuine Christian, however, are usually attended with that consolatory succour which divine wisdom and grace have provided; and he has no sooner said, "O wretched man that I am," than, looking to the cross, and listening to the Saviour, he cries out, "Thanks be to God, who giveth me the victory through my Lord Jesus Christ." Some private means of grace, or, more usually, some public ordinance, is made the instrument of reviving his dejected spirit, and he begins to gain some insight into the nature of the contest within, some knowledge of the wiles of the devil. After a few such seasons, first of dismay and discomfit, and then of recovery and returning stability, he goes on, without any material change in his feelings or expectations. Alternately assailed by error, by persecution, or by affliction, his resource is usually the same; and, after the first misgivings have subsided, he regains his accustomed peace, and his agitated spirit returns to its centre, like the magnet to the pole. But all this time he is learning, as he

goes on, lessons of the utmost practical importance. What had not half its weight when enforced in the form of doctrine, now comes home to his breast with all the point and conviction of personal experience. He learns, for instance, to disconnect his *peace* from his condition ; his *security* from his frames and feelings ; God's *covenant-love* from the appearance of his providential arrangements ; future bliss from the aspect of his present lot. The heart of the weary pilgrim, which longs to repose itself upon the bosom of eternal love, and the arm of the warrior, which aches for the rest of the heavenly Sabbath, learns submission to the dictates of experience. Silencing every murmur, the experienced believer says, "All the days of my appointed time I will wait, till my change come."

" Does my Saviour say, ' whither I go, thou canst not follow me now,' yet he adds, ' thou shalt follow me afterwards.' "

Worldly adversity and affliction, I am induced to name, as one part of experience, perhaps common to all Christians, but certainly one of its most fruitful and profitable stages. Many can testify that they have learnt more in one week's affliction, than in years of public ordinances. " Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." Yes, our best graces have been polished by the hard hand of affliction, and our best gold purified in the furnace. Here we have extracted, like the bee, the choicest sweets from the bitterest plants. If our fear has become negligent, our faith barren, and our love frozen, then our heavenly father adapts his visitation to our case. Perhaps, our hearts, like birds wandering from the parent's nest, have left the protection of his wings, and it is not till the storm of impending dangers rushes upon us from the sky, or the fowler displays his

snare, that we betake ourselves to the refuge. Our dearest friends are cut down, but the real Christian becomes richer by his losses, wiser by his folly, and stronger by his falls. The effect of worldly occurrences, and of all the circumstances of his outward condition, will be to make him say,

" How vain are all things here below,
How false and yet how fair."

The Christian, by experience, resembles the sacred tree of India. Every step it takes forward, it sends down a new stem which answers the double purpose of a support and a root. If our piety is genuine, it will invariably lead us to the God of all grace under every circumstance and condition of life, and the result of such exercises will be a growing teachableness, diffidence, devotion, and delight in God. If we are smitten, we shall kiss the rod. If we are prospered, we shall tremble and pray for more grace, that we may not be high-minded, but fear. In the day of pain, we shall learn resignation ; in the day of adversity, we shall consider ; when wounded, our experience will lead us to the physician ; it will confirm our knees when they tremble, and lift up our hands when they hang down. It is necessary to distinguish such experience from two things often mistaken for it ; —the Christianity of the strict and amiable moralist, and the fanaticism of religious empirics.

Religious experience penetrates deeper, takes a wider range, and rises to a much sublimer elevation than mere morality. Though I am most abhorrent from depreciating Gospel morality, and most anxious to recommend the cultivation of Christian temper, candour, meekness, and charity, yet these alone will form only the mechanism of Christianity : we still want the great moving power. How many lovely and admirable characters are there that seem never to carry

their thoughts above these things; to cultivate amiable tempers, to command their own spirit, to subdue a rising passion, to be peaceful, generous, forgiving, and benevolent, regular and exemplary in the practice of private, domestic, and public religious duties; alarmed when these are neglected, but indiscriminating on the principle in which they are performed; they forget that "he who offers a lamb *may be* as if he cut off a dog's neck; and he who killeth an ox, as if he slew a man;" that amiable tempers may dwell in an unsubdued heart, and sacrifice be offered up with strange fire, or with no fire at all. Men may go a great way in religion without going far enough; and the characters here described may delude some to suppose that this is genuine piety. It may be light, but it is the light of the moon, pure and clear, but cold; the piety of the real Christian possesses both these first qualities, but more like the sun's ray, is warm and genial. True piety is to walk with God, it is far more spiritual and heavenly than that which often passes under its name. It is the flow of soul to God; it is the aspiration of the spirit after divine purity and love, and rests not on the earth; "it soars not with birds of meaner wing, 'the eagle leaves them in a lower sky.'" It is the whole man, body, soul, and spirit; understanding, affections, and desires rendered to the control, and panting for the enjoyment of God. It is God dwelling in us, and walking in us, and making us the hallowed abode of his spirit.

But there is another counterfeit of genuine Christian experience, as delusive, and, perhaps far more extensively pernicious in Christian societies, and quite as fatal in its issue. I mean the imaginations, idle conjectures, feigned ecstacies, and presumptuous assurances of hypocrites and pretenders. The imaginations of this class of pro-

fessors are constantly haunted with demons or angels; their ears ringing with shrieks of anguish, or their hearts leaping for joy at the sight of heavenly countenances. Every day they are fighting with infernal spirits, and every night beholding visions. To them, there is nothing calm, nothing stable or gradual in religion. All is done by fits and starts; converted in a moment; assured in a moment; cast down to hell, and lifted up to Pisgah in the twinkling of an eye!! Now they are all despair, terror, and self-abasement; in an instant it all vanishes as if by enchantment, and they become as presumptuous as before they were unbelieving; they are assured of their election, as much as if they had read their name in heaven: they had no necessity to wait for the working out of their election with fear and trembling, as the fruit of long experience, and of *true* faith; it darted upon them with the suddenness of the lightning's flash, and they have never known what it was to have a fear, or a doubt, or a cloud since. This is *spiritual phantasmagoria*, and it is but rarely that it leads to any thing real or genuine. There are three or four features by which such a species of fanaticism, may be always distinguished. It loaths every thing that is steady and practical; it has no relish for instruction, for it pleads special revelations; it abhors self-denial and mortification; and talks of nothing but *liberty*. It distorts all the natural affections, and presents a hideous figure of pride, ignorance, rashness, and censoriousness. "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." But "beware of those that creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins." I may hereafter resume this important subject, in the mean time I remain, your's, &c. PARASTAR.

REVIEW OF BOOKS, &c.

Correlative Claims and Duties, &c.
by the Rev. S. C. Wilks, A. M.
&c.

(Concluded from page 488.)

In his *second section*, Mr. Wilks proposes to discuss the question of the *expediency* of an Established Church; and though it is possible, had he been better acquainted with what Dissenters have written upon this point, that he would have merged it in the still higher question of whether such a church is *scriptural*, we yet feel no objection to his making the most of it, and no hesitation in attending him through this part of his investigation. We must, however, be allowed to premise a few things on the value of this species of argument. The doctrine of *expediency*, applied to moral and religious questions, is clearly of all modes of reasoning the most feeble and deceptive. The grounds of *duty* and *obligation* ought, we conceive, to be placed in something less doubtful and difficult, and to be traced to principles of more easy and general application. The question of *expediency* is complicated, variable, and unwieldy; fit rather for a divine than a human decision. A mind that looks beyond the mere aspects of things, and tries to estimate their value and importance by their abstract qualities, or their remote issues, must feel it to be a measure full of infinite peril, to implicate the grounds of moral and religious duty with the shifting and unmanageable doctrine of *expediency*. In short, what is this boasted theory, either in relation to morals or ecclesiastical discipline, but a virtual resignation of conscience to the short-sighted calculation of consequences, or an abandonment of the eternal principles of virtue and religion, to the interpretation of every man's caprice? And what must we

think of the inconsistency and feebleness of that system, which, after assuming as its first maxim—its unassailable entrenchment—the *Bible, the Bible only is the religion of Protestants*, is under the necessity of crossing this well-defined and impregnable frontier, to occupy a mere shifting sand—the very ground from which the Papist has chased, and will for ever triumphantly chase, every antagonist who has dared to claim it. If we are to adopt *expediency* as a valid ground of argument, in defence of the alliance of Christianity with the State, and of the constitution and discipline of churches, how shall we meet the popish argument for an authorized interpreter of Scripture, for general councils, for a visible and infallible head, and the thousand other inventions, which, judging humanly, or, as Mr. W. expresses it, *asθωπτων*, may all be pronounced, by the wisest civil and ecclesiastical councils, highly expedient? The doctrine in question is the very principle on which the whole superstructure of popery stands. Grant the Romanist this, and it will be difficult to impede, and impossible to prevent, his ultimate triumph. Against such Protestants as our author, we conceive the principle in question might be pleaded, by a Catholic, with infinite effect; for if it will vindicate an establishment from the objections of Dissenters, why may it not vindicate a whole ecclesiastical system? For our own parts, we are constrained to deny to the advocates of all establishments, whether of Rome, England, or Scotland, that the *expediency* of any principle, supposing it could be made out, is of any authority to control the conscience, or prescribe the path of Christian duty. We therefore wholly reject the argument itself

as unsound and popish; and as calculated, when fairly employed, to sanction a host of other human inventions; all the legitimate offspring of that unnatural and monstrous alliance, which a legal establishment of Christianity involves. The patrons of this doctrine, in the present day, seem wholly unconscious of the extent of its application; and we take upon us humbly to caution all who are disposed to use it as a valid argument, to remember that they must also, in their turn, accept it as such; and that when once it is allowed to guide our judgments in religious concerns, it is not possible to say to what issue it may lead, or what contradictory views, in the hands of ingenious and able pleaders, it may be made to support. The obvious defect of this species of argument is, the impossibility of determining, upon so obscure and contracted a view as the best of human and finite beings must necessarily take, what is, or is not expedient. It is much more consistent with our character of frailty, is more evidently the dictate of true wisdom, and will be found in the issue more conducive to the peace of the church, and the glory of God, to require divine authority for every principle, and every observance of a religious nature.

Had we not thus much to say on the subject of Mr. Wilks's second section, and were the principle upon which we have animadverted a common ground between Churchmen and Dissenters, we think we should feel no difficulty in the task of countermining his arguments, and showing the *inexpediency* of an established church. We cannot refrain from indulging the suspicion, though Mr. W. may think it uncandid, that, after he had arranged the arguments of his essay, and selected the subject of the present

section, as one of the chief sources of proof, his heart failed him as to its validity; or that when he began to array his strength, and accumulate his illustrations, his good sense perceived the weakness of the ground he had assumed, and induced that brevity and haste which characterize this section, and finally led him to that reference to a subsequent argument, which amounts to the confession, that little, either solid or convincing, can be urged for the *expediency* of an established church. For, with two long notes, which occupy a full page, the whole section is comprised in three pages and a half; so that the argument, which our readers might expect would be laboured with no little subtlety and skill, and of which, as being the only *positive* argument for establishments, so much more ought to have been made, is contained in *two pages and a half!* But of the hurried manner in which the topic is dismissed, we should have no ground to complain, had the little which is said aspired to any thing like a fair elucidation of the proposition—that a *church establishment is expedient*. To us he appears virtually to decline any such effort; for after an introductory paragraph, in which he tells us, that “expediency is not in itself a sufficient, or even in many cases, a legitimate, argument in moral questions;” and after touching upon the social and political benefits, on which, he observes, “it would be unworthy of a Christian advocate to rest the expediency of an established church;” he advances, in page 27, to what he denominates its *religious expediency*—the only part of the argument, which, upon his own showing, is worthy of a Christian advocate. That we may not appear to evade his reasoning, or misrepresent his mode of treating the question, we shall extract the

whole of what he has said on *religious expediency*.

" But it is with its *religious expediency*, if we may so speak, that we are at present concerned. We are advocating the cause of an establishment simply and exclusively as a *spiritual institution*; as an instrument in the hands of God for the preservation and communication of religious knowledge, and for the salvation of the souls of men. And if, as we trust, this point can be satisfactorily proved, it will be amply sufficient to shew the expediency of a national church establishment; or, rather, expediency will be merged in the higher argument of *necessity*.—pp. 27, 28.

We do not wish to dispute the author's liberty to merge the *expediency* of an establishment in its *necessity*; but it appears to us, that, in an argumentative discussion, each section, enumerated as a distinct ground of proof, should be susceptible of a separate illustration, without subjecting the writer to the charge of announcing, under two names, what at last proves to be but one argument. It may be an artifice of generalship, whether honest or wise we would not determine, thus to parade the same soldier under two names; but in the day of battle it would be found a deceptive expedient. As to what Mr. Wilks says on the political expediency of an establishment, though " it would be unworthy of a Christian advocate to rest the expediency of an established church" on that ground, we may be permitted to observe, that all his remarks apply to Christianity as it exists in the Bible, and as it operates upon society by a *divine power*, not as Christianity *established by human laws*; for these are two things essentially distinct, though constantly confounded by Mr. Wilks. Upon this point he observes—

" It would be unworthy of a Christian advocate to rest the expediency of an established church upon its social and political benefits; though in a subordinate view these are of no trivial importance. Religion is intimately connected with the best interests of a state; and heathen legisla-

tors themselves discovered the expediency of strengthening the one by what they knew of the sanctions of the other. How much more, then, must the public recognition of Christianity, which is a *revelation* from God himself, be a blessing to the nation? If we view its effects upon the principles and morals of all classes of society; if we consider how forcibly it tends to restrain crime, to soften ferocity, and to humanize war; how powerfully, while it inculcates contentment and obedience among the people, it enforces equity and moderation in their governors; how it elevates character, confirms every moral sanction, and increases the sanctity of oaths and compacts, with all its thousand benign and balmy influences; surely it cannot but be *expedient* to recognize it as the religion of the state, and to appoint a national apparatus for its promulgation. Opinions may differ as to its details, and these are not at present the question; but its leading moral features are obvious to all; and scarcely any system of professed Christianity can be so corrupt as not to be practically better than a total deprivation of its influence. We see this even in countries where the established church labours under all the manifold errors and delusions of the Papacy itself."—pp. 25—27.

We feel no hesitation in assenting to the proposition, that a visible and social profession of Christianity is intimately connected with the best interests of states: but then it is Christianity in its practical operation on all sects and parties, thereby reflecting an influence on the national character and habits; and not Christianity as professed and legally endowed in one single privileged sect. Let not that be ascribed to the legal incorporation of one class of Christians, which a true inspection will determine to be the general result of Christianity, working by its divine and unassisted power upon all. If Christianity is so beneficial to states, and produces as good a social result in one denomination as in another, then why is not Christianity in general, or why are not Christians indiscriminately the object of legislative protection and patronage? This is the legitimate bearing of Mr. W.'s argument. Like one we formerly examined, it proves too much;

for, if we are not greatly mistaken, it tends to show, not that the government of a nation should select and endow one section of its Christian population, and tax all the rest for their support, while at the same time it virtually discourages all the other divisions of the same great body, but that it should consider all, who equally contribute to promote the ends for which the institutions of civil society are designed, as in justice entitled to an equal share of protection and patronage. The relation in which the English establishment stands to the state, affords a demonstration that something widely different from the social and political benefit of the people, or the general ends of good government, have been allowed to influence kings and senators in their views of an established church. But such is Mr. W.'s argument from political expediency; and such is, we conceive, a fair and candid reply. We therefore now pass on to his *third section*, which is devoted to the proof of the proposition—that *a church establishment is scriptural*. Under this section the most prolific source of proof, as was to be expected, is found in the Old Testament. He has detected the principle of an establishment in the domestic and household worship of the Patriarchs. Abraham commanded his children and his household after him; he "was not a mere private individual"—"his 'household' was in fact a large and powerful clan." Still they were his household, more strictly dependent upon him than modern domestics upon their master: they were his property. So that no parallel exists between the relation of Abraham to his servants and that of a king to his people. Besides, if the case of Abraham gives any sanction to the principle in question, it proves, not the right of kings to provide religious in-

struction for the people, but their absolute and personal authority to command their subjects to conform to their religion; for such was the nature of Abraham's *establishment*. But this would be a principle wholly repugnant, we presume, to Mr. Wilks's views. And if so, then the case of Abraham's authority over his "household" must be entirely dismissed from the argument.

Our author next finds scriptural authority for establishments in the whole of the antediluvian period. But his reasoning is all inferential. He does not refer to a single fact. We may therefore well be excused the trouble of showing how improperly such a style of argument is designated—*scriptural proof*. The same species of reasoning might be employed to prove that the Sabbath should be observed on the seventh, and not on the first day of the week—that bigamy is scriptural—that circumcision is obligatory—and that a monarchical government is sinful. Mr. W. proceeds to advert to the Jewish economy, and says, "surely it is a consideration not a little forcible, that, in the only nation for which Jehovah condescended immediately to legislate, he saw fit closely and inseparably to unite the ecclesiastical with the civil polity." It is scarcely necessary for us to repeat what we said in our former number upon this topic—it is the very singularity of the fact, that they were the only nation for which God condescended to legislate, that exempts their economy from becoming a rule or authority for others. When the special purposes for which it was instituted were attained, the ruler ceased from Judah, and the temple lost its glory. Their state was removed off its divine foundations, and sunk to the level of all other human institutions; while the principles of their religious economy, and the forms of their worship, became as *nugatory* as

any of the ceremonies of heathenism. How *unscripturally*, then, is the union of church and state, in their case, construed into an obligation upon Christians! Mr. Wilks appeals to the justice and force of a remark by Hooker, which, instead of admitting as either just or weighty, exposes, we conceive, the fallacy in reasoning, and the error in point of doctrine, into which all, who employ this argument from Judaism, fall. Hooker, as quoted by Mr. W. says—

"Our state, therefore, is in this respect according to the pattern of God's own ancient elect people; which people was not part of them the commonwealth, and part of them the church of God; but the self-same people were both under one chief governor, on whose supreme authority they did all depend."—p. 30.

Now this very identity of the church and the world is the fatal error of establishments—the thing which they think is sanctioned by the Old Testament, but which we maintain is literally and universally contradicted by the practice and the precepts both of Christ and his apostles. No such identity between the commonwealth and the church, as that pointed out by Hooker, and so explicitly commended by Mr. W., was ever designed by Christ, but the very reverse. The church and state which God founded by Moses were both of them, indeed, but one. That kingdom, civil and ecclesiastical, was of this world: but when Christ formed his disciples into a Christian society, he gave them *his* commands, and not those of Moses, to keep; adding, *My kingdom is not of this world*, thereby, as we apprehend, guarding them directly against that very error into which Hooker fell in the above passage, and into which Mr. W. has inconsiderately followed him. It is what we have always alleged against establishments; they tend to constitute the self-same people the church of Christ and the subjects of a hu-

man prince; or, in other words, to confound and obliterate all distinction between the church and the world. But we have said more than enough on the fallacy of calling that a *scriptural* argument, or any argument at all, which would derive the first principle of Christian societies from the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of Judaism.

Mr. Wilks next leads us to the New Testament, which, in our humble opinion, is the ground to which he ought to have confined himself, as it is the only position from which he can hope effectually to assail the principles of dissent. When we read first the title of his *third section*, *a church establishment scriptural*, we expected something like an array of scriptures, upon the plan of the inductive process of reasoning. We supposed he might be able to cast something like a plausible colouring over a few isolated scriptures. But he has not trusted himself with the quotation of a solitary passage. He proves that establishments are scriptural, without employing a single text!! We could, indeed, scarcely believe our eyes, when we arrived at the end of this section. The whole proof it attempts to construct is *inferential*, not *literal*; *constructive*, and not *direct*. We shall attempt a fair and brief analysis of the argument employed under this section.—The apostles were Jews, accustomed to the principle of an established church; Christ sent them forth among Gentiles, accustomed to similar national establishments; he never directed them to forbid such institutions; therefore he sanctioned them: if he had been unfriendly to the principle, we should expect he would have instructed them against it. The absence of direct instruction in favour of such institutions is to be laid to the account of their being already admitted; and there was

no necessity to teach either Jews or Gentiles their lawfulness. The absence of such direct sanction in the New Testament is also accounted for by the fact, that "our Lord and his apostles were not speaking or writing to princes and legislators, but either to ecclesiastics or private individuals." This is scarcely correct, for of the Epistles, sixteen are either to particular *churches*, or to all believers generally, and only five to ecclesiastics, or private individuals. But this, by the way. Mr. W. closes his argument from the Scriptures thus:

"Does not the general tenor of the New Testament, to say nothing of particular texts, appear to proceed on the supposition of there being an outward and visible church, in which order, symmetry, and union, are to be preserved, and that in a manner which cannot, *on a large scale* at least, be conceived possible but by means of a publicly recognized church establishment? The organization of a regular apparatus for the instruction of all ranks of the community in the faith and practice of the Gospel, appears to be not less a scripturally sanctioned duty, on the part of Christian rulers, than the promotion of religion by a parent among his children, or by a master among his servants."—p. 35.

This, with a short extract from Bishop Stillingfleet, containing a hypothetical statement of the duty of kings in relation to the Gospel; and a short paragraph, pointing out how the question of establishments generally, becomes involved here with that of the particular form of Episcopacy, which it was not the author's design to discuss, and therefore he is not to be expected to enter upon it, makes up this section. So that, under the most weighty and important branch of the whole argument, we are not directed to one scripture, nor presented with one single example, to remove or diminish our scruples. As to what is alleged in our last extract, *upon the supposition of there being an outward and visible church, &c.* we can assent most clearly to his premises, but to no particle of his conclusion. So far from it, we think, that in no case,

and in no degree, can any sanction be obtained to an establishment from either the Gospels or the Epistles. And yet, when the latter were written, outward, visible, orderly, and united churches existed, and that *on a large scale*, and on a scale daily enlarging; and yet, in all the apostolic directions to these societies already incorporated, there is no intimation given of the lawfulness of a secular alliance, or of the advantages that are supposed to result from it. In short, the only kind of visible church supposed to exist throughout the New Testament, is exclusively an independent society; nor have we any reason to infer that Christ intended to support any other kind of "*order, symmetry, and union,*" than is compatible with perfect liberty of conscience, and founded on unanimity of consent, and voluntary co-operation; all of which appear to us to be invaded, or superseded, or outraged, by laws of uniformity—a uniformity which exists without agreement, and can be maintained only by oppression. "The organization of a regular apparatus for the instruction of all classes of the community," is the object alleged by all hypothetical reasoners in favour of establishments. But really we have very little veneration for an apparatus which is at once so expensive and so unproductive. If the apparatus is created for the sake of the instruction, and yet that instruction is not effected, then the apparatus is an incumbrance; and if the instruction is produced most inefficiently by voluntary efforts, then the apparatus is proved inexpedient. We believe the Church of England is about as efficient as any other apparatus of the same kind in Christendom. It has enjoyed the uninterrupted experiment of a hundred and fifty years, and what has it done for the instruction of all classes of the com-

munity? We believe that more has been done within the last twenty-five years for the promotion of the Gospel, than in any other preceding fifty, and yet it has not been effected by the regular apparatus. According to calculations made by Churchmen themselves, there is not more than *one-fifth* of the clergy that understand the Gospel: how then are the remaining four-fifths to be an efficient apparatus? or what is likely to be the quality of the instruction they impart? We believe, after all that is said in favour of the regular apparatus, and all that is annually expended to keep it in repair, that by far the largest portion of that instruction which can be accounted, by a real Christian, valuable or saving, is communicated by voluntary Christian zeal and benevolence. And what might not such principles be expected to produce, if they were left free from the ungrateful and heavy burdens of forced levies, and if the chief causes of jealousy and division were removed?

We are really quite at a loss to conceive why Mr. W. should think it *impossible* for the Christian church **ON A LARGE SCALE**, to be preserved in order, symmetry, and union, without an establishment by human legislators. Surely this is, though doubtless not intended to be, a severe reflection on the wisdom of the great head of the church: it appears to have been penned without a due attention to the fact, that the church of Christ never was promoted on so *large a scale*, nor enjoyed so much order, nor exhibited so much symmetry and union, as within that very period, during which the doctrine of establishments remained a *terra incognita*. We are shocked by the bold and presumptuous assertions into which churchmen are betrayed by their zeal for a human invention. Their arguments uniformly assume, that the

constrained uniformity which an act of parliament can produce in the ritual of worship, and the garbs and orders of ecclesiastics, is that spiritual order, that symmetry of holiness, and that unity of love, which were first enforced exclusively by divine affection and authority. The whole scope of the last extract from Mr. W. tends to show, that the sacred edifice of the Christian church cannot stand upon a *large scale*, unless it is buttressed up by human laws, or unless it is fenced round by what he denominates, though in rather an infelicitous phraseology, *the dead hedge of an establishment*. This is the happy invention, which Jesus Christ was never so fortunate as to discover, otherwise his church might, even in his own time, (for he could as easily have converted Herod or Pontius Pilate, as Matthew, the tax-gatherer, or Paul, the persecutor,) have existed on a much larger and more respectable scale: — however it is now deemed, both north and south of the Tweed, to be that essential *apparatus*, without which the modern extended interests of Christ's church would soon fall into decay.

We are now advanced to the last section of Mr. W.'s argument: *a church establishment necessary*. There is considerable ambiguity in the use of this term on most occasions; but applied in this connexion, it appears to resolve itself either into absurdity or impiety. There are various generations and gradations of *necessities*. There is a natural necessity, and a moral necessity, an absolute and a partial necessity, a spiritual necessity, and a human necessity, and of *civil, political, and ecclesiastical* necessities, there are more formidable classes and clans than we shall trust ourselves to name. Mr. Wilks, however, leaves his reader in considerable doubt after all, which of the kinds of necessities, or whether all of them compressed into one, is the necessity

(for necessity is the mother of invention) which first led to the device of ecclesiastical establishments. Mr. Wilks does, indeed, divide this section of his essay into two parts: in the first he proposes to prove the necessity of an establishment from the nature of things; in the second from the testimony of experience. The object of the author in the first of these divisions is to prove, that, as there is a tendency in every thing human to deterioration, an establishment presents the best possible counteraction. "It is an earthly barrier against an earthly aggression." But this argument is wholly unavailable against those who, with ourselves, believe, that the *principles* of a New Testament church are all *divine*, and, therefore, liable to no deterioration, or change. If these principles were universally recognised, there could be no need of any *earthly barriers against earthly aggressions*. The best barrier against all aggressions, either from the wisdom or folly, the power or weakness, the obstinacy or changeableness of man, is provided by the great head of the church in the supreme, perfect, and comprehensive authority of his word. As to the necessity of an establishment derived from experience, facts are decidedly in favour of those churches which have owned and erected no *barriers against earthly aggressions*, heresies, changes, and deteriorations, but the word and authority of him who has said, "When the enemy cometh in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Facts are completely adverse to the efficiency of human constitutions as barriers against earthly aggressions. The church of England is a case in point. It is an unquestionable fact, that her earliest founders were all Calvinists, and intended their creeds and formularies to stand as a barrier against the *earthly aggressions*

which might be made upon those doctrines. The first of such aggressions was made by Arminianism about the time of James the First, and being made against an earthly barrier of human creeds, confessions, and formularies, soon carried a successful breach under Baro, Buckridge, Barrett, and White. From that time forward, the barriers of the church of England were prostrated every day before Arminian, Pelagian, and Arian heresies; and that church, at the present moment, presents a greater scene of disorder, bitter contention, and disagreement, and is constituted of a far more heterogeneous mass of all the most discordant, moral, and religious elements, than any other denomination in Great Britain. Where has been the barrier against the decline and extinction of all Christian discipline; against the secularity of the clergy, against the enslavement of ecclesiastics to the will of civil rulers, or against the greatest of all evils—the neglect of men's souls?

There is much more in Mr. W's argument from necessity which we could readily refute; but this is not altogether the place, nor could we allot to the subject the necessary space. Most that he alleges is hypothetical and repugnant to the uniform tenor of the New Testament, and the practice of the purest ages. With regard to that part of his last section which relates to what he calls the *conservative property* of establishments, we are decidedly at issue on all his principal statements. We think the following passage, which is an epitome of the whole argument from experience, a mere illusion of the imagination. Personification is a delicate and dangerous device of rhetoric, and when employed in relation to plain history, assumes more of the character of a dream than of narrative, and, as the fol-

lowing passage will show, deserves to be classed rather with fiction than with fact.

" If we refer, for example, to the church of England, how great have been her struggles, how manifold her trials! We have seen her coping, in the sixteenth century, with the machinations of a foreign hierarchy; bearing up, in the reign of Charles the First, against the diabolos heaped upon her by her semi-popish friends; surviving subsequently the fanaticism of her ultra-Protestant enemies; resisting, in the reign of Charles the Second, the deluge of universal profligacy; and at length, after various alternations of prosperity and adversity, of evil report and good report, arousing herself, in our own day, to new vigour, clothing herself with the garments of her ancient sanctity, and promulgating with youthful zeal, yet with the wisdom of mature age and holy discretion, the blessed truths which are the standard of her opinions, and which, amidst every vicissitude, have remained imperishable, in her confessions of faith, her formularies of instruction, and her manuals of prayer. How often, during these periods, have our dissenting brethren themselves kindled their torches at our altars! And when any remarkable instance has occurred of renewed earnestness in religion among the body of the people, what has usually formed the nucleus of it but our own Protestant establishment?"—pp. 61, 62.

There is something, certainly, very poetical, very graceful, and very imposing in the personification of this mysterious female. This invisible but venerable matron, who always retains her purity, and her piety, and her zeal, distinct from her sons and her daughters, though they become never so heretical and corrupt; this celestial but ideal abstraction, which receives a species of homage little short of divine, appears to us sour critics to have no existence at all, but in the fervid imaginations of her admirers. What is the church of England, or the church of Rome, or any other church in Christendom, when all the individuals who compose it are left out of our conceptions? We have no distinct apprehension of what can be intended by the term church, apart from the human members of which it may at any given period be composed. Let the same style of de-

scription, as that employed by Mr. W. in the above extract, be adopted by the patrons of any other church. The Presbyterian, for instance, or, without intending offence, the Independent, which, upon the confession of all ecclesiastical historians, might trace down its struggles and its trials from the time of the Apostles themselves, and what an imposing, pathetic, and venerable matron might be presented in this poetical personification of the Genius of Independency.

As to the church of England forming the nucleus of revivals and reformations, we think there never was committed a greater error in point of historical fact. When did the church favour revivals and reformations? When did *Dissenters kindle their dying torches at the altars of the establishment?* If we might continue and perfect Mr. W.'s pathetic and splendid personification, we should say, that this SHE—was a persecuting fury in the reigns of Elizabeth and James; a popish harlot under King Charles the First, an abandoned, flattering, time-serving menial to Charles the Second, and since, instead of arousing herself, she has passed away above a century under an oppressive lethargy, or fatal malady. She has been the last to submit to be aroused, even while all around her was bustle and energy. She has lifted her voice against schools and missions, and her hand against many of the busy intermeddlers who would sound the trumpet of alarm in the ears of her perishing sons and daughters. At the present day, though a small section of her family is roused to spirited and magnanimous deeds, yet the lady herself must be identified with the description given of her by one of the greatest of statesmen. She consists of—"a Calvinistic creed, a popish liturgy, and an Arminian clergy." But we wish not to enlarge upon the testimony from experience.

He must be but superficially acquainted with the history of the church generally, who has not learnt that most of its corruptions and contentions have originated in the very principle for which Mr. Wilks pleads. Its sorest wounds have been inflicted by those ecclesiastics who have been allowed to borrow the sword of state. Its most fearful convulsions have been occasioned by the struggle to erect and defend *human barriers*, and its most extensive devastations and depopulations are to be attributed to the foul and unnatural alliance of civil with ecclesiastical power.

The second chapter of Mr. Wilks's performance is addressed wholly to churchmen; and is designed to show the laity, bishops, and clergy, how they may revive the cause of religion generally. To much in this part of the volume, we can give our cordial concurrence. In Mr. W.'s religious opinions we can, for the most part, accord. We have no doubt either of his piety, or his sincerity; and, to the Christian temper which pervades his book, we have already given testimony. Hostile as we feel ourselves compelled to be to the whole principle and details of his argument, we can yet most earnestly wish, that pure and undefiled religion may greatly revive within the established church, and that every parish might be favoured with such a minister as the author of the present work. There is still room for a second reformation; and, throughout the kingdom, there is yet abundant space and occasion to employ all the established and unestablished apparatus that can be brought to bear upon the ignorance and irreligion of the people. We were not a little astonished to find, that Mr. W. makes no reference whatever to any accredited defence of dissenting principles. Some answer surely should have been furnished to what dissenters count their

standard writers, and some reference to Peirce, Delaune, Graham, and especially Conder, would have shown that Mr. W. had not neglected to inform himself upon the other side of this controversy. The fourth book of *Protestant Nonconformity*, by Josiah Conder, would probably have convinced Mr. W. that the largest part of what he has written is utterly futile. The principal arguments which Mr. W. has employed, appear to us unworthy of a Protestant, while the only one which could have constituted a sheet-anchor to the vessel of episcopacy—the direct testimony of the inspired writers—is virtually abandoned.

The Christian and Civic Economy of large Towns. By T. Chalmers, D. D.—No. 7, On Church Offices.—No. 8, On Sabbath Schools.

THE first of these pamphlets, which is entitled on *Church Officers*, is not devoted, as might have been expected, to an examination of the different kinds of offices established in the early Christian churches; nor to a discrimination of the different kinds and degrees of authority, or spheres of duty, allotted to them by the great Head of the Church; but simply to the exposure of what Dr. Chalmers accounts a very pernicious abuse, which has grown up within the establishment of Scotland, in relation to the offices of elder and deacon. The founders of that Church conceived that they discovered divine authority for three orders of church officers—ministers, elders, and deacons. The office allotted to the elders was to “assist at the dispensation of sacraments, to be the bearers of religious advice and comfort among the families, and, in general, to act purely as ecclesiastical labourers for the good of human souls.” The

office of the deacon was established with an exclusive view to the necessities of the poor. From causes either remote from the view of Dr. C., or upon which he could not trust himself to speculate, the duties allotted to the eldership have grown into disuse, while those which belong to the deaconship have been transferred to the hands of the elders. Thus the two offices have been merged in one; a plurality of cares, of a widely different, and, as Dr. C. contends, of an opposite, and almost counteracting nature, have been devolved on the same individual. The name of elder has been retained in its application to this mongrel kind of office, while the deaconship has fallen into general neglect.

The subject of this pamphlet is entirely local; and though our readers may well suppose that every thing Dr. Chalmers touches will become interesting, we cannot think that many of them will be either instructed or amused by a lengthened analysis of the work, or specimens of the manner in which it is treated. The sum of the whole essay appears to be this:—Dr. C., with most of the pious ministers of the Established Church of Scotland, perceives, and deeply regrets, the growing secularity of the whole system. The ministers are burdened to vexation by the government with secular duties. The growing pauperism of the country is beginning, in various places, to connect compulsory assessments with the office of the elder; while the elder, in consequence of being vested with the character of receiver and distributor of the poor's rate, is rapidly losing the character of a spiritual friend to the poor, and is viewed by them, according to Dr. C.'s representation, much in the same light as that in which the poor of England contemplate their *overseers*—that is, as their

oppressors. This degradation of the office of elder, Dr. C. maintains, unfitts him for the discharge of his spiritual duties towards the poor, and disinclines *them* to receive him in any other light than that of a public treasurer, from whom they are to draw, or claim, by importunity or by impudence, as large a sum as possible. Dr. C. urges, with great force, the propriety and necessity of an immediate reformation in these abuses, and shows, we think with considerable effect, the wisdom of keeping secular and spiritual offices as far apart as possible. We heartily subscribe to the principle of his reasoning, though we think he himself is hardly aware of its comprehension. If it hold so powerfully, in relation to the inferior office of elder, with how much greater propriety and effect may we apply it to the character of the Christian pastor? But we would not at present push this inquiry further. We sincerely hope that some attention will be paid to the remonstrances of our Christian and Civic Economist, and that the eldership of the Church of Scotland will not only be purified from the secularity into which it has sunk, but that, when its spiritual functions are again defined and limited by their church-courts, care may be taken to put into that office only such individuals as are described by Paul, 1 Tim. iii. 8. "The deacons must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let them also first be proved, then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless."

The eighth number of Dr. C.'s work is entitled, *On Sabbath Schools*. Various other denominations would have been far more appropriate; ten or twelve pages, at the close, are devoted to a vindication of those excellent insti-

tutions; but near three-fourths of the book are occupied in the discussion of a measure now pending in the Church of Scotland for improving the education of the clergy. This misnomer will be readily overlooked for the sake of the excellent matter which the pamphlet contains, and of which we shall proceed to furnish some specimens, with the explanations necessary to a clear understanding of the case which Dr. C. has so well argued.

In the sitting of the General Assembly, held on the 24th May, 1821, an Overture was presented from the Presbytery of Glasgow, the object of which was, to "obtain an alteration in the regulations regarding the students of divinity, viz. that they be examined by the Presbyteries to which they belong, before entering the Divinity Hall; that they be obliged to attend theology, at least three regular years, and to attend Hebrew and Church History for two years."

That our English readers may be able to enter into the spirit of the above overture, it may be proper to make known to them, that there are at present two ways of studying divinity in the Church of Scotland; either by regular, or partial sessions. In the former, the student attends the lectures of the Professors; is present during the delivery of all the *exegeses* and discourses of his fellows; and, in short, attends the lectures on divinity as he would any other academical course. In the partial sessions, the student has merely to deliver a discourse, prepared in the course of the preceding year, and read a lecture, sermon, or *exegesis*, after which he is allowed to retire, for that season, from college. According to the first mode, the student has to attend four full sessions, in four different years, before being *taken on trials*; according to the latter he must be six years at least, but in the whole

six years there may not be six whole days of academical attendance: indeed even one day may not be necessary, as instances occur when the good-natured Professor hears the discourse at his own parlour fire-side, and the student and he are both saved the trouble of walking to the hall.

The Rev. Dr. Chalmers, with that ardour with which he enters into every question in which he takes a part, warmly supported the overture made in the General Assembly, as quoted above, and has embodied the arguments brought forward in his speech on that occasion, in the eighth number of the present work.

The Doctor commences with affirming the necessity of a learned clergy, to defend Christianity, and keep her in countenance with the higher orders, which he considers to be best done under the "strengthening canopy of an Establishment."

"But though learning must be enlisted on the side of Christianity, for the purpose of upholding her in credit and acceptance among influential men, yet it is not indispensable for the purpose of conveying her moral and spiritual lessons into the heart of a disciple. The truth is, that many of the topics about which ecclesiastical learning is conversant, are exterior to the direct substance of that Bible which professes to be a written communication from God to man: such as the historic testimonies that may be quoted in favour of religion, and those church antiquities, to acquire the knowledge of which, we must travel through many a volume of ponderous erudition, and at least the history, if not the matter, of the various controversies by which the Christian world has been agitated. We are aware that much of this controversy relates to the contents of the record, as well as to the credentials of the record. Yet, however its plainer passages have been darkened by heretical sophistry on the one hand, and its obscure passages may have divided the opinion of critics and translators on the other, this does not hinder, that, from the Bible, and the English Bible, there may be made to emanate a flood of light, on the general mass of an English peasantry—that, to evoke this light, a high and artificial scholarship is neither necessary nor available—that, on the understanding of a man, unlettered in

all that proceeds from halls or colleges, the word of God may have made its sound, and wholesome, and sufficient impression: and that from him the impression may be reflected back again, on the understanding of many others, as unlettered as himself—that thus all, in the book of God's testimony, which mainly goes so to enlighten a man, as to turn him into a Christian, may be made to pass from one humble convert to his acquaintances and neighbours; and, without the learning which serves to acquire for Christianity the dignified though vague and general homage of the upper classes, he may, at least, be a fit agent for transmitting essential Christianity through the plebeianism that is around him.

"To deny this, indeed, were to resist the affirmations of that very record in which all that may be known of Christianity is found. We are there told, and from the direct mouth of the Saviour, that things essential to salvation may be revealed unto babes, which lie hid from the wise and prudent. The poor to whom the Gospel is preached have a full share of this revelation. The Spirit of God, we are told, acts as a revealer; and yet it is not his office to make known any truths additional to those which are already engrossed in Scripture. The light that cometh from him, is a light which shineth on the page of inspiration, and causes us to discern only what is graven thereupon. The doctrine of the Bible is made known to us by this process, and nothing else. Under the tuition of God's Spirit, we only learn what has already been fully expressed by the letter of the Bible, but which, without his influence, can never be fully apprehended in its meaning, or felt in its power. It is thus that he communicates nothing at variance with the written testimony, and nothing which has not been already declared by the written testimony; though his interference be necessary, in order that the testimony be received. The operation may be illustrated by the way in which an impression is given to any substance, through the means of a stamping instrument. The substance may be so hard and impracticable, as to resist the impression, when a weak arm is put forth to urge forward the instrument; but it may be made to take in a full and a fair impression, when a strong arm is employed. And thus it may be with the impression of Bible doctrine, on moral, and thinking, and intelligent man. The Bible may be brought into contact with the mind of the reader; and learning and talent, and all the forces that mere humanity can muster, may be made to aid the impression of it, and be wholly ineffectual. The Spirit of God may then undertake the office of an enlightener; and, in so doing, he may keep by the Bible as his alone instrument; and not one truth may pass in conveyance from him to the spirit of that

man on whom he is operating, but simply and solely the truths which are taken off from the written word of God; and all the Christianity that he teaches, and that he leaves graven on the hearts of his subjects, may just be a correct transcript of the Christianity that exists in the New Testament. And thus it is that a workman of humble scholarship may be transformed, not into an erratic and fanciful enthusiast, but into a sound scriptural Christian, without one religious tenet in his understanding than what is strictly and accurately defined by the literalities of the written record, and without one other religious feeling in his heart, than what is most pertinently called forth by the moral influence of the truths which have thus been made known to him."—pp. 307—311.

He goes on to exemplify the necessity and the uses of human talent in the ministerial office, and illustrates it in the remarkable instance of Bishop Horsey against Dr. Priestly, and in that of Jonathan Edwards. Of these, and similar cases, he observes—

"It is thus that, by the light of nature, one may trace the characters which stand out upon the seal; and by the light of nature, one may be helped, at least, to trace the characters that are left upon the human subject, in consequence of this supernal application."—p. 318.

We would not endeavour to dispute the accuracy of the Doctor's remarks in the last instance, but we should be inclined to aver, that an experimental knowledge of the operation of the truth in the heart, with but slender advantages from the cultivating hand of education, would form a tact for discerning the genuineness of religious character, which all the science of the schools could never communicate.

In further noticing the character of Edwards, the Doctor contrasts the depths of his metaphysical investigations with the plainness of his pulpit ministrations.

Now conceive these two faculties, which were exemplified in such rare and happy combinations, in the person of Edwards, to be separated, the one from the other, and given respectively to two individuals. One of these would then be so gifted, as that he could apply the discrimi-

vatory texts, by which to judge of Christianity; and the other of them would be so gifted as that, instrumentally speaking, he could make Christians. One of them could do what Edwards did from the pulpit; another of them could do what Edwards did from the press."—p. 320.

"It is here that churches, under the domination of a worldly and unsanctified priesthood, are apt to go astray."—*Ibid.*

And a worldly unsanctified priesthood will ever exist where mere human learning forms the passport to all the offices. But we will hear the Doctor a little further:—

"The true Christian policy of a church is, to avail itself of all the zeal, and all the energy, which are to be found both among its ecclesiastics and its laymen, for the production of a positive effect among our population; and then, should folly or fanaticism come forward along with it, fearlessly to confide the chastening of all this exuberance to the sense, and the scholarship, and the sound intellectual Christianity, for the diffusion of which over the face of our Establishment, the Establishment itself has made such ample provision. Such is our impression of nature's lethargy, and deadness, and unconcern, that we are glad when any thing comes forward—that we are pleased to behold any symptom of spiritual life or vegetation at all—and so far from being alarmed by the rumour of a stir, and a sensation, and an enthusiasm, in any quarter of the land, we are ready to hail it as we would the promise of some coming regeneration. A policy the direct opposite of this is often the reigning policy of a church; and under its blasting operation, spurious and genuine Christianity are alike obliterated; and the work of pulling up the tares is carried on so furiously, that the wheat is pulled up along with it—the vineyard is rifled of its noblest blossoms, as well as of its noxious and pestilential weeds; and thus the upshot of the process for extirpating fanaticism may be to turn the fruitful field into a wilderness, and to spread desolation and apathy over all its borders.

"A church so actuated does nothing but check the exuberance of spiritual growth, and may do it so effectually as to reduce to a naked trunk what else might have sent forth its clustering branches, and yielded, in goodly abundance, the fruits of piety and righteousness. There is no positive strength put forth by it, on the side of vegetation, but all on the side of repressing its hated overgrowth. It makes use of only one instrument, and that is the pruning-hook; as if, by its operation alone, all the purposes of husbandry could be served. Its

treatment of humanity proceeds on such an excessive fertility of religion in the human heart, that all the toil and strenuousness of ecclesiastics must be given to the object of keeping it down, and so confining it within the limits of moderation; instead of such a natural barrenness that this toil and this strenuousness should rather be given to the various and ever-plying activities of an evangelist, who is instant in season and out of season. It is thus that the artifices of sectarianism may exhibit a totally different aspect from the inclosed and well-kept garden of the Establishment. In the former there may be a positive and desirable crop, along with the weeds and rankness which have been suffered to grow up unchastened; in the latter there may be nothing that offendeth, save the one deadly offence of a vineyard so cleaned, and purified, and thwarted in all its vegetative tendencies, as to offer, from the one end to the other of it, an unvaried expanse of earthlikeness."—pp. 322—324.

The Doctor draws a parallel between physic and theology, but indignantly rejects the charge of quackery to an unlettered, unlicensed practitioner in the latter; and maintains, that, to convey Christianity from one bosom to another, is as much within the reach of a peasant as a philosopher.

"To work a moral effect, such as love, on the heart of another, one cannot fail to perceive that mere science, even though it should be the science of our own nature, were utterly unavailing; and that the man who hears this affection in his own heart, would do more to call out a return of it from the heart of his neighbour, than he who, without love himself, has, at the same time, a most intelligent discernment into the law of its operation. And it is the same with a Christian effect. He who can best work it on another's mind is a Christian himself. It is the sympathy of his kind feelings—it is the observation of his actual faith, and of its bright and beautiful influences upon his own character—it is the winning representation of a doctrine that may be read a thousand times over, without effect, in the written Epistles of the New Testament, but which is armed with a new power to engage and soften the heart of an inquirer, when he sees it exemplified in the person of that believer who is a living epistle of Jesus Christ—it is the melting tenderness by which he presses home the overtures of the Gospel on his fellow sinners, and, above all, the efficacy of his prayers for grace to turn and grace to enlighten them; these are what may accomplish a man who is unlettered in all but his

Bible, to be a far more efficient christianizer than the most profound or elaborate theologian ; these are what essentially constitute that leaven by which, either with or without philosophy, a fermenting process, for the growth and the diffusion of Christianity, is made to spread far and wide among our population.

" This is the reason why, though ecclesiastics should be accomplished in the whole lore and scholarship of their profession, they should not discourage the effort and activity of lay operatives in the cause. They may inspect their work, but they should not put a stop to it. When they discover an union of intelligence and piety in an individual, even of humble life, they should patronize his attempts to spread around him the moral and spiritual resemblance of himself. They also may freeze into utter dormancy the best capabilities that are within their reach of Christian usefulness ; and thus it is possible for a clergyman, by the weight of his authority, to lay an interdict on a whole host of Christian agency, whom he should have summoned into action, and of whom it is possible that each may be far beneath him in the literature of Christianity, and yet each far before him in the instrumental power of making Christians."—pp. 328, 329.

Our author draws this important subject to a close, by endeavouring to stimulate "two classes of the clergy" to consider the question he has been discussing—those who, he says, have "a taste for popular agency," and those who "have a strong disrelish towards the active interference of laymen :" both, he conceives, should unite to promote clerical learning ; the first to show that they do not "tremble, lest the light of philosophy should penetrate into the dark unknown of their own inglorious skulking-places ;" the other "to rear a literary and enlightened priesthood, under the eye of whose vigilance all that is truly noxious and evil will be more effectually disarmed also."

We should gladly have inserted a few of the Doctor's arguments in behalf of Sabbath schools, did our limits permit ; but having quoted so largely, we must be content with merely glancing at them.

He argues, and we think very justly, that Sabbath schools have not superseded family tuition, that the want of such tuition is the ground on which they have been reared—they bring Christian principles to be topic of conversation between parent and child, where it would not have been introduced, and increase it where it would.

The Doctor proceeds to point out the advantages of a school on what he calls the local system. We admit that it appears an admirable and plausible scheme, when ushered into the world under the robe of his fascinating eloquence ; but practice shows, that schools formed as near the local plan as may be, are constantly tending to unlocalize, and that the frequent removals among the poor families in great towns, make an ever-shifting change in the Sabbath schools, if locally conducted ; and we think it not in every case so good to break the attachment and the improvement of a child, by removing it, when its parents shift to a contiguous lane, though that lane should be without the locality. Besides, schools are and must continue to be voluntary, unless some external compulsory measure be connected with them. Though teachers and patrons of schools should agree to localize, unless parents do so too, nothing is done ; for they still retain the right of sending their children to any school they choose. Dr. C. has faithfully exerted himself to press this subject upon the attention of his readers ; and we can only say, that if it is of half the importance that he attaches to it, or has been found in practice to be accompanied with half the valuable results, which he represents as flowing from it, it has a claim to the immediate attention of all the friends of the rising race.

Literaria Rediviva; or, The Book Worm.

The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce. By John Milton. 1644. Republished 1820.—Sherwood and Co. 12s.

THE republication of one of Milton's English Tracts, affords us an opportunity of expressing, more fully than we have yet done, our opinion of the prose compositions of the unrivalled Bard of Britain. We have not, however, selected the work, the title of which stands at the head of this article, with any intention of recommending it to general perusal, or of expressing unqualified approbation of its principle and reasonings. On the other hand, we think it the least valuable of the great author's works, and, for various reasons which it is neither important nor convenient here to state, the last to be read as an authority: nor have we placed, in this department of our Magazine, one of the writings of John Milton, with the intention of implying, that any of them are unknown or neglected; nor with the fond conceit that we could renew their freshness, had it been lost; or recall their fame, had it been declining. Infinitely far from this are our feelings in attempting the present article. We apprehend, however, that, among English Dissenters, the select tracts of Milton are but too little known; and though there are few men of any literary pretensions among us, who are not familiar with them, yet that, among our young people, and in our educated families, there are not, in the present day, many who have enjoyed the privilege of having their early attention directed to these invaluable productions. If we may but succeed so far as to lead a few individuals to the perusal of these

works, by the present article, we shall be amply repaid, and we are assured our readers will not murmur to see a niche devoted to a brief display of the literary qualities of the greatest prose and poetical writer England ever produced, and to an especial recommendation of those of his compositions which are calculated at once to instruct, delight, and establish the admirers of primitive Christianity.

From the period at which Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr took up their residence in this country, the one at Oxford, and the other at Cambridge, learning experienced a very remarkable revival. A race of Englishmen began to appear, who, for the laboriousness of their researches, the extent of their classical attainments, and the attractions of native genius, equalled any of their continental neighbours, and gave to the age that produced them, an extraordinary character of elevation, independence, and splendour. For the breadth of their inquiries, the acuteness of their disquisitions, and their familiarity with all the writings of antiquity, they were not equalled, certainly not surpassed, by any of the gay, polished, but upon the whole, less profound, authors that succeeded them. They may, indeed, all be charged with too ardent a devotion to some one of the scholastic subtleties which were then the *ignes fatui* of the learned world; for every man of science, and every author of celebrity, was expected to range himself under some class of disputants, and to lend his aid to the support of some of the barren metaphysical speculations which obtained so

predominant an influence over the spirit of the age. Profitless and wearisome as were many of their researches and disquisitions, and closely and diligently as their early studies had been directed to the refinements of the schools, they yet derived thence an abstractness, an originality, and a heroism in thinking peculiar to themselves. Those interminable, cold, and barren heaths, over which their thoughts roamed in a sort of contemplative solitude, had inured them to the most extraordinary mental toil—had left their imaginations to the most uncontrolled, and sometimes fantastic movements, and was one of the principal means of imparting a sort of wild, but chivalrous air to their philosophy and literature.

Among all classes of writers of any eminence in their respective parties, we find a flow of thought, a strength and freshness of diction, which still retains an irresistible charm. There was a luxuriance of imagination; and a sort of bold, adventurous, untiring effort of thinking, which reminds one of the irrepressible fertility and universal fragrance of spring, when nature seems more lavish of her strength and fruitfulness, than in any other period of the year. Yet this was accompanied with a closeness of application, an operoseness of research, the very contemplation of which, even in its results, is enough to oppress the mind of a modern scholar, and which astonishes us the more, as it was the attendant of so much pure, resplendent, and native genius. Though there were many remarkable features possessed in common by all the first rate writers of the age, yet every man supported a character of his own, and exhibited the leadings and traits of originality. The literary character attained by the nation in the Elizabethan age, received accessions of

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refinement, accuracy, and comprehension, during the whole of the succeeding century; and about the commencement of the civil troubles of England, a very considerable improvement is to be discerned among our leading men of literature. Their writings possess, we conceive, much more of completeness, refinement, and nature, than the works of any preceding or succeeding age. The genius and works of Milton afford a striking exemplification of these remarks. We can scarcely trust ourselves to speak of this extraordinary individual by any modern rule or standard. The mould in which he was formed perished in the age which produced him, and it would be injustice to all parties to derive an estimate of his talents and his character, by a comparison with the men of our days. We may be allowed, therefore, to select one of the most distinguished of his contemporaries, that we may not take his portrait out of the gallery to which it belongs; that, by comparison of the two, as of men brought forth and nursed among the same gigantic moral elements, and taking a part in the same convulsive movements of the social body, we may be able to form an estimate of their relative worth and beauty. Our readers will instantly perceive, that the only man of the Cromwellian age, who can be placed in advantageous contrast and illustration to our national poet, was Bishop Jeremy Taylor. They well deserved to be called, in point of literature at least, the heads of their respective parties. Though sentiments more opposed upon all the controversies of the age can scarcely be conceived, than those their respective writings exhibit, nor two styles of composition more diverse than those in which they have enrobed their sentiments; yet they have both infused so much of inimita-

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ble beauty, so much of manly strength, of sublimity, and of imagination into their writings, that homage must be done to their names, not only as long as their respective opinions shall be venerated, but as long as any taste for what is profound in thought, or classical in language, or enchanting in fancy, shall remain in this, or any other nation of Europe. The names of two such men alone, though all their contemporaries should have deserved only to be called satellites of different degrees of lustre, would doubtless be sufficient to elevate any age, and any country, to a proud station in the history of human nature.

The imagination of Jeremy Taylor constitutes his pre-eminent endowment. It may almost be said to constitute, not the embroidery, but the very texture of the garb. It is not the mere graceful scroll or capital, at the summit of the column, but forms the very ground-work or base of the whole; or, like the veining and variegation of the marble, runs through the column itself. Of all the rare and exquisite qualities which were combined in the mind of Taylor, this was the most distinguishable. It often appears in him like a gift of super-human and mysterious origin; spreading its creations around us with the rapidity and ease of enchantment, and making us feel as if our minds were under the power of a fabled magician. He can bear us to whatever region he pleases with equal facility, and spread over every object he only touches, the most glowing and profuse embellishments. If his theme should be a common-place, or, like the evenness of a plane, promise no eminences or varieties of view, no topics of elevated and aerial disquisition, yet he can encircle it with verdant and lofty hills, or

pour the torrent of his eloquence with the majesty of a cataract, across its surface: or though it should resemble the mountain-summit—as high, and as barren, and as cold,—his pages make us realise the description given of some Alpine eminences, of which it is said that the most verdant and beauteous tracts and circles of flowers are found immediately bordering on perpetual snows. Yet, with all his beauty and fascination, it cannot be denied, that he is often extravagant, and on some occasions ludicrously grotesque. His imagination, in many instances, appears to have become rampant and wild, and in some cases so preposterous and fantastic, as actually to become an incumbrance. It sometimes weighs down and cripples his understanding; and is allowed to make the splendour of its creations too prominent and dazzling for the distinctness of his own conceptions, and the apprehension of his readers.

In this respect Milton had greatly the advantage. There is a much sterner logic pervading all his controversial, historical, and political writings. This gives them a vast superiority to those of the Bishop. If they are less ethereal, they are yet more substantial; and if they bear us less frequently into the regions of fruits and flowers, they supply us more abundantly with wholesome aliment, and lead us more frequently to noble and manly exercises. Taylor was prone to fall into lengthened metaphors, to paint his imaginary scenes before the eye more at length, and in all their wonderful and beautiful details; but Milton was the very reverse. He rarely does more than glance at an image; it sparkles in a word, or a phrase, or at the utmost in a single sentence of inimitable beauty. Sometimes, indeed, he indulges in a lengthened

allusion, or parallel, to classic or scripture metaphors and facts; but much less frequently in what may be denominated descriptive painting or protracted imagery. Though there is little of poetry in the style of Taylor, there is much of it in his mode of thinking; while the poetry of Milton is more visible in his style, than in his manner of treating his subject. These qualities might be traced in the latter to the severer discipline of thought, and the stricter school of theology, to which he had been accustomed; but in the former are to be ascribed to the unrestrained play of native genius, and to the more courtly, splendid, and imposing form of religion to which he was attached. Many other qualities in these extraordinary men corresponded minutely and strikingly to the respective schools of theology in which they had been educated. The abstractness, sincerity, and sturdy independence of Milton's mind, found an element in the theoretic views of the Puritans much more congenial to its native bias, and much more adapted to its matured development, than in that system of Protestantism which, in the pursuit of *effect* upon human nature, retained half the pageantry, and all the domination of Popery. It was the very same spirit which afterwards led him to forsake Presbyterianism and embrace Independency. It has been well observed, that "he addressed his noble tract, entitled *Areopagitica*, to an anti-monarchical parliament, from which he expected the reformation of all the errors and encroachments of the late kingly and prelatical government. He was above the little dirty prejudices, or pretences, that they might be trusted with power only because he approved of the men, or depended upon their favour to himself. He had his eye only on

the cause; and when the Presbyterians deserted that, he deserted them, not out of humour, but because they fainted in the progress of that work, to the completion of which their first avowed principles would have led them."* On the other hand, the predominating imagination of Taylor engendered a taste for the imposing and subduing charms of antiquity, and for the splendour of a regal hierarchy. This made him feel the efforts of the Puritans as a sort of Goth-like insensibility to every thing that was winning in taste, commanding in authority, and dramatic in the exterior administration of Christianity; while his political prejudices inclined him, in that age of commotion and innovation, to look more favourably on Episcopacy, because it was better fitted to repress the aspirations of plebeianism, and to subserve the purposes, and support the splendours of royalty. Milton's mind, however, was not to be subdued, before the pageantry of kings, nor to be prostituted at the shrine of secular ambition. He was, from conviction and conscience, a republican, and carried with him too little of the weakness of human nature to be enslaved by a *jus divinum*, or subdued, by what he deemed, the figment of *royal blood*. His mind presents, therefore, a picture of greater severity and firmness. He is more convincing, powerful, and stubborn in argument; much less attentive to refinement and taste, to elegance and ease. Taylor, on the other hand, is always courtly, deferential to admitted authorities, and graceful even in his infirmities. He has much less appearance of labour and massiveness in thinking, but much more of the former, in the ornamental parts of his writing, than his great contemporary.

* Blackburn's Remarks.

In referring to the classical attainments and erudition of these two distinguished characters, it will be observed, that there was a considerable difference both in the line and in the extent of their acquirements. They were both accurate and eminent students of the classics; but the Bishop displays more of the character of an admirer or fancier of classic beauties, which gives to his pages that pye-bald appearance ascribed by Burnett to the sermonizers of the time in which he lived. The memory of Taylor is stored, not merely with allusions to the classic writers, but with their very language. In consequence, his mind appears to overflow with the most beautiful and appropriate passages. His associations on every subject, lead him instantly to some region of Parnassus. This gives, perhaps, an air of pedantry to some of his writings, and would seem to indicate a mind less profound and independent than his really was; though in both these respects he fell far short of Milton. With a taste more perfectly pure and dignified, with a knowledge equally extensive and intimate of the stores of classic erudition, our great poet is equally happy in his allusions, and much less pedantic in his citations. He is less willing to borrow ornaments from the classics, than to create for himself; and is evidently more conscious than Taylor of the opulence of his own imagination. He therefore quotes much less for the purposes of illustration, embellishment, or authority. He had evidently drank deep at the same fount as the classic writers themselves, and is to be viewed more in the light of a rival than of an amateur. It is related by Mrs. Clark, one of his daughters, that she and her sister used to read to him in eight different languages. Dr. Symmons says, "The lan-

guages are not specified, and unless we separate the two dialects of the Hebrew, and the two also of the Spanish, we can reckon only six of them. But with Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish, we know that Milton was intimately conversant."

With respect to Christian antiquity, it may perhaps not be easy to determine which possessed the more general and extensive learning. If Taylor may be said to have studied that class of writers rather as a theologian, to Milton belongs the credit of having surveyed them more as a philosopher. He looked upon the fathers and the schoolmen, not as authorities to be deferred to, but as all other human writers, to be examined and proved by a higher test. He hence paid little deference to their opinions, and followed them only when their reasonings obtained the enlightened assent of his judgment. This circumstance gave Milton, as a reasoner, great advantage in the simplicity and directness of his arguments, though it deprived him of many of those graces and charms which distinguished the eloquence of his episcopal contemporary. In his controversy he has the appearance of great sternness and severity. His assault is sometimes coarse, often impetuous, and generally overwhelming. He triumphs in the greatness of his strength, and seems ever reaching a deadly blow at some vital part of his antagonist. As if he could not be satisfied with obtaining a victory, or inflicting a chastisement, he wages a war of extermination and utter destruction against the cause he opposes. This imparted extraordinary vigour, though less of grace and softness, to his controversial works, while it contributed to make him incomparably the most popular and

formidable puritan writer of his age.

In point of extent and accuracy of research, there was one man of the day, and but one in the conformist party, who surpassed our great poet, and who, in conjunction with Bishop Hall, appeared as the antagonist of Milton, on the arena of theological controversy. It will be anticipated that we refer to Usher. He may, we apprehend, be justly considered as the most profoundly and extensively learned man of the age, though he himself conceded that superiority to Selden. If he possessed any advantage over Milton in point of erudition, yet, in the strength of his cause, our author enjoyed an amazing superiority. In effective popular eloquence, neither Hall nor Usher, who united their strength against the Smectymnuans, could stand against the impetuous rush of this puritan Achilles. His controversial pieces, both in theology and politics, seem to possess every quality calculated to render them efficient against the system of his opponents: and such efficiency they evidently possessed in an astonishing degree; as was witnessed in the applause poured forth by a grateful and exulting nation, in the hey-day of their liberty and independence, on the first appearance of his answer to Salmasius. It seems almost incredible that an author, whose writings were so uniformly powerful and splendid, should have produced two works within the lapse of only a few years, the first of which should have raised him to the very summit of popular favour, while the latter, though so evidently destined to immortality, could scarce attract a purchaser, and had to rise by slow gradations into public favour. Yet such was the respective receptions given to the answer to Salmasius and the *Paradise Lost*. But we return to

our comparative estimate of his talents.

By any one who candidly contrasts him with his eloquent rival, we think it must be admitted, that he possesses all the brilliancy of Taylor, or even more, without his conceits; all his erudition, with none of his pedantry; all his variety, harmony, and copiousness of diction, with a more uniform, masculine dignity and vigour. It is undeniable that he very far surpassed the Bishop in consistency and soundness of judgment, and that he evinced a more steady, simple, and undivided submission to the authority of revelation. While his prelatical and papistical opponents took the long and circuitous route through antiquity, in order to defend or corroborate their sentiments, though as well acquainted as themselves with the country they had to pass, he yet aimed at a higher and purer region, and vaulted at once to the unearthly and commanding elevation of scriptural authority, where, with irresistible might, he repelled every assault, in the manly consciousness of truth, while he poured down, in thickest flight, his keen missiles of ridicule and wit upon the heads of his assailants. If in any respect we are disposed to qualify the opinion we have here offered, it is in this latter point. The severity of his ridicule is on some occasions unworthy of his piety, and unbecoming a gentleman. This can be justified upon no principle, though it may be excused from a consideration of the general habits of controversialists in that age, and of the unmeasured contempt and scurrility which both Milton and the whole puritan party had to bear. This defect is, however, by no means general in his polemical tracts.

We have already extended this article too much, and must now

hastily name those of the prose writings of Milton which are most deserving of general perusal, and which will most amply repay our Christian readers. We could, indeed, wish to see a re-publication of those of his tracts which are best adapted to general reading, and which are most likely to be useful in the present day. The following we have always considered as a selection, with which every Englishman, and particularly every Dissenter, ought to be familiar:—

Animadversions on the Remonstrants' Defence.

Apology for Smectymnuus.

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The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates.

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Considerations to remove Hirelings.

Of True Religion.

Letter on Education.

the unrestrained toleration of opinions: it may serve as a reply to those who, in our day, are exclaiming so vehemently against schism.

"First, when a city shall be as it were besieged and blocked about, her navigable river infested, inroads and incursions round, defiance and battle oft rumoured to be marching up, even to her walls and suburb trenches; that then the people, or the greater part, more than at other times, wholly taken up with the study of highest and most important matters to be reformed, should be disputing, reasoning, reading, inventing, discoursing, even to a rarity and admiration, things not before discoursed or written of, argues, first, a singular good-will, contentedness, and confidence in your prudent foresight, and safe government, Lords and Commons; and from thence derives itself to a gallant bravery and well-grounded contempt of their enemies, as if there were no small number of as great spirits among us, as his was, who, when Rome was nigh besieged by Hannibal, being in the city, bought that piece of ground at no cheap rate, whereon Hannibal himself encamped his own regiment. Next, it is a lively and cheerful presage of our happy success and victory. For as in a body when the blood is fresh, the spirits pure and vigorous, not only to vital, but to rational faculties, and those in the acutest and the portest operations of wit and subtlety, it argues in what good plight and constitution the body is; so when the cheerfulness of the people is so sprightly up, as that it has not only wherewithal to guard well its own freedom and safety, but to spare, and to bestow upon the boldest and sublimest points of controversy and new invention, it betokens us not degenerated, nor drooping to a fatal decay, but casting off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption, to outlive these pangs, and wax young again, entering the glorious ways of truth and prosperous virtue, destined to become great and honourable in these latter ages. Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle mewling her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam; purging and unscaling her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of seats and schisms."—*Areopagitica.*

ANALYTICAL AND CRITICAL NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The Forgiveness of Sin; a Sermon delivered in Steps-meeting, Tiverton, Devon, on Wednesday evening, January 17, 1821. By William Vowles. 1s.

AMONG all the interesting and important doctrines of Christianity, if any one may be said to claim a priority to the others, on account of its relative importance, or its practical influence, it is surely the one to the elucidation of which the present discourse is devoted. It lies at the foundation of all our addresses to the Supreme Being, and without its acknowledgment, and a scriptural perception of the truths it supposes, and the consequent duties it implies, no act of our worship can be considered acceptable. Mistakes in this point were the origin of most of the profane and impious rites of the pagan nations of antiquity, and even among Christians, ignorance of this fundamental principle has led to the most degrading superstition, and the most absurd and ridiculous priesthood. Under the covert of that ignorance, which prevailed for so many centuries over the Christian world, what innumerable inventions have the avarice of some, and the stupidity of others, palmed upon the votaries of popery, in the place of the divine doctrine of the forgiveness of sins by the blood of Christ. Indeed, if we say, that among Protestants also, there exists many great and fatal misconceptions of this fundamental truth, and that many individuals, brought up under the purest light of evangelical truth, are ignorant of the true way of access to God, as though they had been instructed in no other school than that of paganism, we shall not incur the imputation of uncharitableness. We think there is yet much to be done, even in the Christian world, in imparting and impressing, in the full extent of their influence and importance, simple and scriptural views of the only way of salvation.

The author of this sermon has viewed the subject, we conceive, in its true magnitude, and in its inse-

parable connection with the hope and the holiness of every Christian. In his first division he considers the *doctrine* of the forgiveness of sins—as to its *author*, its *object*, its *manner of bestowment*, and its *extent*; in his second head he has illustrated its influence, particularly in relation to that fear which it produces in the heart. Under this head we meet with many excellent, practical, and judicious observations. The subject is treated with great seriousness, and scriptural simplicity, and is judiciously exhibited in its bearings upon Christian practice. On the whole, we consider this sermon well calculated to remove erroneous views of the doctrine upon which it treats, to confirm the experienced Christian, and to awaken sinners to the value of that unutterable benefit which it proposes to exhibit.

Three Letters addressed to Messrs. John Littlejohns, jun. and Philip Moass, committed by James Burke, Esq. and Peter Glubb, Clerk to the Devon County Bridewell, for three months, for preaching in an unlicensed place, without the consent of the owner. By William Beal.—Sold by Cullum and Back, Exeter; Blanshard, R. Baynes, and T. Hamilton. 6d.

IN our last number (p. 502), we expressed a wish to be informed of the circumstances of that disgraceful transaction, which has lately occurred in Devonshire, in the case of Messrs. Littlejohns and Moass. We have, in consequence, been favoured by Mr. Beal, the author of the letters under consideration, with a copy of his work, which puts us in possession of the details of that act of persecution. Messrs. Littlejohns and Moass, are, it appears, local preachers in the Wesleyan connexion. These persons were committed to the Devon County Bridewell, until the fine of five pounds each should be paid, on the alleged crime of having, on the 17th of June, preached in an unlicensed house in Little Torrington. It ap-

hastily name those of the prose writings of Milton which are most deserving of general perusal, and which will most amply repay our Christian readers. We could, indeed, wish to see a re-publication of those of his tracts which are best adapted to general reading, and which are most likely to be useful in the present day. The following we have always considered as a selection, with which every Englishman, and particularly every Dissenter, ought to be familiar:—

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In closing our remarks, we cannot refrain from offering a single extract as a verification, at least in the main, of the observations we have made. We scarcely know, indeed, out of such a mass of beauty and splendour as the above tracts present, how to select a detached passage: but the following may suffice to those who have never read Milton's prose, to convey some faint notion of its strength and its eloquence. The author is stating his reasons for thinking that the nation would be ultimately consolidated and benefited by the troubles and convulsions it had experienced in

the unrestrained toleration of opinions: it may serve as a reply to those who, in our day, are exclaiming so vehemently against schism.

"First, when a city shall be as it were besieged and blocked about, her navigable river infested, inroads and incursions round, defiance and battle oft rumoured to be marching up, even to her walls and suburb trenches; that then the people, or the greater part, more than at other times, wholly taken up with the study of highest and most important matters to be reformed, should be disputing, reasoning, reading, inventing, discoursing, even to a rarity and admiration, things not before discoursed or written of, argues, first, a singular good-will, contentedness, and confidence in your prudent foresight, and safe government, Lords and Commons; and from thence derives itself to a gallant bravery and well-grounded contempt of their enemies, as if there were no small number of as great spirits among us, as his was, who, when Rome was nigh besieged by Hannibal, being in the city, bought that piece of ground at no cheap rate, whereon Hannibal himself encamped his own regiment. Next, it is a lively and cheerful presage of our happy success and victory. For as in a body when the blood is fresh, the spirits pure and vigorous; not only to vital, but to rational faculties, and those in the acutest and the pertest operations of wit and subtlety, it argues in what good plight and constitution the body is; so when the cheerfulness of the people is so sprightly up, as that it has not only wherewith to guard well its own freedom and safety, but to spare, and to bestow upon the soldest and sublimest points of controversy and new invention, it betokens us not degenerated, nor drooping to a fatal decay, but casting off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption, to outlive these pangs, and wax young again, entering the glorious ways of truth and prosperous virtue, destined to become great and honourable in these latter ages. Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam; purging and unscaling her long-absent sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms."—*Areopagitica.*

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The author of this sermon has viewed the subject, we conceive, in its true magnitude, and in its inse-

parable connection with the hope and the holiness of every Christian. In his first division he considers the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins—as to its author, its object, its manner of bestowment, and its extent; in his second head he has illustrated its influence, particularly in relation to that fear which it produces in the heart. Under this head we meet with many excellent, practical, and judicious observations. The subject is treated with great seriousness, and scriptural simplicity, and is judiciously exhibited in its bearings upon Christian practice. On the whole, we consider this sermon well calculated to remove erroneous views of the doctrine upon which it treats, to confirm the experienced Christian, and to awaken sinners to the value of that unutterable benefit which it proposes to exhibit.

Three Letters addressed to Messrs. John Littlejohns, jun. and Philip Moass, committed by James Burke, Esq. and Peter Giubb, Clerk to the Devon County Bridewell, for preaching in an unlicensed place, without the consent of the owner. By William Beal.—Sold by Cullum and Back, Exeter; Blanshard, R. Baynes, and T. Hamilton. 6d.

In our last number (p. 502), we expressed a wish to be informed of the circumstances of that disgraceful transaction, which has lately occurred in Devonshire, in the case of Messrs. Littlejohns and Moass. We have, in consequence, been favoured by Mr. Beal, the author of the letters under consideration, with a copy of his work, which puts us in possession of the details of that act of persecution. Messrs. Littlejohns and Moass, are, it appears, local preachers in the Wesleyan connexion. These persons were committed to the Devon County Bridewell, until the fine of five pounds each should be paid, on the alleged crime of having, on the 17th of June, preached in an unlicensed house in Little Torrington. It ap-

pears, however, that on the above-mentioned day, Mr. Littlejohns was at Stratton and Lunston; and Mr. Moass at Lane-mill and Forda, and when they really *did* preach at Little Torrington, they *did not* engage in that service in an unlicensed house. The strange inconsistencies manifested in this revival of ecclesiastical domination, we leave to be reconciled by the Gentlemen who presided on this occasion. We are happy to hear, however, that the prosecuting parties have found it necessary to relinquish their original intention, and that on the appearance of these letters in the *Devon Alfred*, a gentleman in office released the sufferers from imprisonment. The gentleman desired to be nameless, and expressed his regret, for what he had done, confessed he lay at the mercy of those whom he had so unjustly detained, and was willing to make any reasonable reparation. The inhabitants of Torrington, it appears, have acquired a distinguished pre-eminence in their exertions in the cause of bigotry and inquisitorial policy, and as such perseverant heroism deserves to be held up to public notoriety, we shall copy, from the present letters, a short account of one or two actions of the same nature, which have been perpetrated in this village. "It is well-known to many, that to outrage the rights of conscience, is no new thing in the vicinity of Torrington. The usage of a Mr. D., who was pulled from the place in which he was worshipping, and most violently abused, is within the recollection of many in the north of Devon. It is now about twelve years since, that I was preaching in Torrington: licensed myself, and in a duly licensed house, I was under the protection of the British laws, and ought to have been also under the protection of the Magistrates. While engaged in the public duties of religion, an infuriated mob (said to have been set on by one who might have found better employ) beset the house in which we were worshipping — broke the windows — forced us into the street, and there covered us with filth, severely stoned us, and very considerably endangered our lives. When we reached the place of our abode, we were not more secure;

the house was assailed, we were driven from one room to another, and this riotous conduct continued until nearly midnight."

We would fain hope that the individuals who first engaged in this disgraceful proceeding, have, upon reflection, discovered the inconsistency, impiety, and intolerance of their design, and that the opposition excited against the efforts of the worthy individuals, who have been the objects of this prosecution, will turn out rather to the furtherance of the gospel. Indeed, already, the impolicy of the attempt to suppress the gospel has become evident; the individual in whose house, and without whose consent Messrs. Littlejohns and Moass were said to have preached, in the charge brought against them, has subsequently registered a room in his habitation, and opened it for public worship.

Prudence and Piety recommended to young Persons, at their entrance upon the active Duties of Life. By John Pye Smith, D.D.—London: Holdsworth, 1820. 1s.

THIS discourse was delivered to the congregation, at the Gravel-pit Meeting-house, Hackney, on the 2d of January, 1821, and especially addressed to the younger parts of that congregation. The text upon which the sermon is grounded, is contained in 1 Samuel, xviii. 14, and gives occasion to the preacher to recommend the conduct of David, in his youthful days, to the attention of, and as the example to, his auditory. Dr. Smith has divided his subject into, 1st. A review of some of the most instructing and exemplary circumstances in the early character of David; and, 2dly. A statement of that which was the ground and effective principle of all the prudent, well-judged, and excellent conduct of David: "The Lord was with him." The sermon altogether abounds with instructive and important advice to young persons, and is creditable to its author, both as a Christian and a scholar. We heartily recommend its perusal to those who are entering into life, as a seasonable manual of conduct in private and relative duties.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

I. STATISTICAL VIEW OF DISSENTERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Wishing to make this department of our work as complete as possible, we earnestly beg our Correspondents to furnish us with all documents and information relating to it, addressed to the Editors at the Publisher's.

CORNWALL.

(Continued from page 498.)

SAINT IVES.—Two nonconformists of eminence, who were ejected under the Bartholomew Act, appear afterwards to have preached privately in this sea-port town, or its neighbourhood. Mr. CHARLES MORETON, who was removed from Blisland, and Mr. JOSEPH SHERWOOD, who was removed from the pulpit of St. Hilary. The latter of those good men resided at St. Ives to the day of his death, which was about 1705; and was, says Calamy, "a constant faithful preacher at that place and Penzance, alternately, every Lord's-day, besides lectures on the week-days. He was of a sweet engaging temper; and though for a long time under very great indisposition of body, and constant pains, yet unwearyed in his work, both in his study and in the pulpit. Some little time after his ejection, he was cited to the Spiritual Court for not going to church. He appeared, and gave for a reason, that there was no preaching; that, as he was a minister himself, he could not, with any satisfaction, attend there, only to hear the clerk read the prayers; but promised to go the next Lord's-day, if there was a sermon. Finding, upon inquiry, that there was no minister the next Lord's-day, any more than before, he went not, and so was cited again to give the same answer. The Lord's-day following, great multitudes came to church out of curiosity to see Mr. Sherwood, who, being informed by the churchwarden, his friend, that there would be no sermon, went into the church and seated himself in the clerk's desk all the time of prayer, and then went up into the pulpit, and prayed and preached from those words, 'And I will avenge the quarrel of my covenant.' The rumour of this action was soon spread abroad, but such was the people's great affection to Mr. Sherwood, that though there was a crowded congregation in a great church, his enemies could not get any one to give information against him, until (by-wheedling) they got an acknowledgment from his friend, the churchwarden; and then, by threats, frightened him into a formal information. He was then carried to a petty session of justices, where one Mr. Ro-

binson sat as chairman, who greatly reviled Mr. Sherwood, and called him rebel, which he bore patiently, with this reply; that as he was a minister of the Gospel, and at the church where there was so great an assembly, he could not but have compassion on this multitude, and give them a word of exhortation. Mr. Robinson replied, "but did ever man preach from such a rebellious text?" Sir, (replied Mr. Sherwood) I know that man is a rebel against his Creator, but I never knew that the Creator could be a rebel against his creature." Mr. Robinson cried out, "write his mittimus for Launceston Jail;" and then, turning to Mr. Sherwood, said, "I say, Sir, it was a rebellious text." Mr. Sherwood looked him full in the face, and addressed himself in these words: "Sir, (said he,) if you die the common death of all men, God never spake by me." He was sent to prison, where he found favour with the keeper, and had liberty to walk about the castle and town. Mr. Robinson returned home; and, a few days after, walking in the fields, where his maid was milking the cows, a bull that was never known to do any mischief, and, indeed, was tame beyond what is common in those creatures, came up to a gate where he stood, and his maid before him, and turned the maid aside with his horns, and ran directly upon Mr. Robinson, and tore out his bowels. This strange providence brought fresh to mind what had passed at the private sessions, and, in a little time, Mr. Sherwood getting leave to return home, was sent for to Penzance, where some justices met. He immediately went, though he expected no other than to be sent back to jail. But, when he came there, Mr. Godolphin came out, and took him into another room, and said, "Sir, I sent for you to know how you came to express yourself in such a manner, when we committed you: you know, Sir, what has since befallen Mr. Robinson." To which Mr. Sherwood replied, "Sir, I was far from bearing any malice against Mr. Robinson, and can give no other answer than that when we are called before rulers, for his name's sake, whom we serve, it shall be given us in that very hour what we shall say." To which Mr. Godolphin replied, "Well, Sir, for your sake, I will never more have any hand

in prosecuting Dissenters.' And he was as good as his word." This town, also, gave birth to a nonconformist minister of considerable eminence, the Rev. *Thos. Tregos*, of whose labours an account will be found under *Mabe* and *Milar*, (p. 442.) and some further mention of him under *Penryn*, (p. 495.) Mr. SHERWOOD preached for some time in the warehouse of a Mr. Lee, who is supposed to have erected a meeting-house, the site of which is known to some of the older inhabitants. Not long after the decease of Mr. Sherwood, Mr. ROBERT GOUGH was ordained, July 7, 1708, and was here in 1715. He was succeeded by Mr. WILLIAM TUCKER, from Launceston, some time before 1729, who was followed by Mr. JASPER HOWE, who is believed to have continued here for forty years, and to have been succeeded by a Mr. JONES, from Wales. The congregation falling to decay under the latter ministers, the place was deserted, and converted into dwelling-houses, some time before the year 1770. In 1786, a successful effort was made to re-introduce the Gospel into this borough by Mr. ROBERT M'ALL, then a student at one of Lady Huntingdon's Colleges. Mr. M'ALL settled at St. Ives, and in January, 1804, the present neat and convenient place of worship was erected and opened by him, in conjunction with other ministers of the county, and he continued to preach in it with success till the year 1813, when he removed to London. He was succeeded by the Rev. ROBERT MEEK, to whom succeeded, in 1815, the Rev. J. GAY, now of Bere Regis, in the county of Dorset. Upon his departure the Rev. J. BROUNSELL became their pastor, who removed in 1818, and was followed, as a temporary supply, by the Rev. J. JOHNS. Early in the present year, the church called to the pastorate over them, the Rev. OWEN MORRIS, from Lowestoff, in Suffolk. The meeting-house is capable of containing 400 persons, and is well attended.

At ST. ERTH, a populous village, about five miles from St. Ives, the minister of the latter place preaches once a week to a small church which was raised, as were several other village congregations in this neighbourhood, chiefly by the instrumentality of Mr. M'ALL.

SAINT MAWES.—The Gospel was introduced into this place, through the instrumentality of a pious individual, who, in the year 1786, opened a malt-house for preaching. In this place sermons were either read or preached, as occasion served, for some time. Soon afterwards, the Rev. THOMAS WILLS, from London, preached upon the beach;

and, after that, Mr. UPTON and Mr. M'ALL obtained the use of a boathouse, in which place the preaching continued till the present meeting-house was erected. It will seat about 200 persons, and was opened on the 31st of March, 1809, by Messrs. Angear, M'All, Moore, and Wildbore. Mr. BEVAN, who was ordained upon the same day as an itinerant, was the first stated minister. He was succeeded by Mr. WINNECOAT, who has since quitted them, and the congregation are now destitute.

ST. MICHAEL PENCHIVELL.—Some account of Mr. Joseph Halsey, who was ejected from the pulpit of this parish, will be found under *Merther*, (p. 443.)

ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT — famous for superstition, and to which, in the days of Popery, many pilgrimages were made, to behold and to worship a certain indentation in the top of the rock, which had been enclosed within a chapel, and was denominated the *seat or chair of Michael the Archangel*. Here, in 1809, the Baptists erected a place of worship, which is well attended; and we trust that superstition will long continue to give place to the worship of God according to his revealed will in this populous place.

ST. TUDY was the scene of the persecutions of an eminent nonconformist, Mr. NICHOLAS LEVERTON, of whose conversion, remarkable adventures, labours, and sufferings, Calamy has given an interesting account, (v. 2, p. 137.) He was eventually compelled to quit this country for America, where he died.

ST. WINNOM.—From the pulpit of this parish was ejected Mr. THOMAS HANCOCK, of whom it is stated that he continued preaching in these parts, as he had opportunity till extreme old age. See *East Looe*, p. 326.

SALTASH.—This place was blessed by the labours of Mr. JOHN LYDSTON, who was ejected from St. Mellior, and removed hither, "where he preached to a small number, as the times gave him leave. He had some bitter enemies in the town, who gave him much trouble and vexation. Mr. Robert Beal, the minister, and Mr. Peter Stephens, and Mr. Bening, two of the magistrates, were of that number. Once he was convicted on the Act against conventicles, when there was but one present above the number that act permitted, and he a young man under twenty-one, though above sixteen. A fine of £40. was laid upon him, and warrants for levying it were granted, and the watchful malice of those who were set against him, obliged

him, for a long time, to keep his doors shut, that he might secure his house from being rifled, and his goods from being sold. At other times he was searched for, and insulted, and threatened, to the great terror of his family. And sometimes he left his habitation, wife, and children, to escape a jail." He was a man of good learning, seriousness, and piety, but died in his fifty-eighth year, Sept. 3, 1671; and we have no account of any effort to keep up a Gospel ministry after his decease for many years. Here is now a small Baptist congregation, raised not many years since by the labours of the Baptist brethren of Plymouth Dock.

TRURO.—Here there appears to have been a congregation of nonconformists of the Presbyterian denomination from a very early period. Where they first assembled for worship cannot now be ascertained; but their last meeting-house, part of which is still standing, was erected in the year 1708. It was only thirty-five feet long, and eighteen feet wide, within the walls, and had no gallery; so that their number at that time must have been very small. Scarcely any thing is known respecting their history. Early in the eighteenth century, their worship is said to have sustained a

long interruption on the removal of a minister, who left them on ill-terms, and carried away the key of the meeting-house, which he retained as long as he lived, a period of seven years. On his death, his widow returned the key, and the place was re-opened, and the worship resumed. Whatever may have been the original character of the people, there is reason to believe, that they gradually subsided into the same state of formality and indifference with many other dissenting churches of that denomination. Their last minister was the Rev. PETER KELLO, a man of general knowledge, respectable learning, amiable manners, and unblemished life; but not remarkable for fervour or zeal in his ministrations. His precise theological sentiments were not easy to be discovered from his preaching; but, by persons intimately acquainted with him, they were considered, in reference to divine grace, to be Arminian, and, in the Trinitarian dispute, to be heterodox. He died about the year 1784, after having resided at Truro near half a century. Of the few remaining members of the congregation, some united with the other Dissenters, and some conformed to the Established Church.—(To be continued.)

II.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Idle Academy.—The ministers appointed for the annual examination of the Students, met on the morning of Tuesday, June 19th, and the whole day was occupied in that task. In Latin, the Students read in Virgil *En.* 2. v. 670—740, and *En.* 4. v. 632—705. Livy, lib. 1. c. 48—52, Horace 2d Epistles of the 1st Book, and 28th Ode of the 1st Book, and Juvenal Sat. 3, v. 21—83, also parts of Sallust, Caesar's Commentaries, Cicero's 4th Oration against Cataline, and his 2d Philippic. Some of them have read nearly all the Select Orations of Cicero. The junior Greek classes use the Minores of Dalzel, and therefore portions of various authors are read in this part of their course; but the senior classes, not using the Majors of that compiler and annotator, have had their attention restricted to a few of the great masters of Grecian eloquence, especially Xenophon, Longinus, and Homer. Passages of those authors were translated by the different classes. One of the classes has almost finished the first five Books of Homer's Iliad. In the Hebrew and Chaldee Scriptures, the following chapters were read, Gen. xxii. Isa. lxv. Dan. vii. In the Hebrew classes there were eleven Students. Part of the Syriac version of the 3d chapter of Mat-

thew was read. The French has not been neglected; Geography, Astronomy, Rhetoric, Pronunciation, English Composition, and especially the composition of public discourses, have had the usual attention paid to them. During the two last years, most of the Students have also gone through a Latin system of Divinity.

On the following day, a numerous assemblage of friends to the Institution was convened in the chapel adjacent to the Academy. After prayer had been offered by the Rev. H. Pool, the senior Students delivered Essays on the following subjects. Mr. Turner on the Value of the Soul; Mr. Holgate on Faith in Jesus Christ considered as a Duty. Mr. Aspinall on the Efficacy of Divine Grace. Mr. Holroyd on Conversion. Mr. Rheder on the Promises of God. Mr. Blackburn on the Prospects of the Church; and Mr. Parsons on the Wisdom of God displayed in the Redemption of Man. The Rev. John Cockin then addressed the Students at considerable length, and very appropriately, on the wise regulation of their studies for the acquisition of knowledge, and concluded with prayer. In the evening the proceedings of this anniversary were closed, by the Rev. Joseph Fox, of Bolton-le-Moors, who

delivered an excellent discourse from the words of the apostle, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

On this occasion the increasing prosperity and usefulness of the Institution excited grateful feelings and sensations of pleasure, among its assembled patrons. The peculiarly favourable situation of the Academy amongst numerous congregations of Dissenters of the Independent denomination, has made the occasional services of the Students of incalculable importance to the interests of religion, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. The Institution, though originally formed on a very limited scale, has already furnished thirteen neighbouring congregations with ministers, and four more students are this year commencing stated ministerial labours in the vicinity.

Cheshire Union.—The half-yearly meeting of the Cheshire Union was held at Sandbach, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in September. On the Wednesday evening a sermon was preached by the Rev. J. Harris, of Macclesfield, from Matt. xvi. 18. On the Thursday morning, at 7 o'clock, a sermon was preached by the Rev. G. B. Kidd, of Whitchurch, from John xv. 26. The ministers and delegates from the several churches in the county, met, at 10 in the forenoon, to transact the business of the Union. Several interesting communications were read, from the itinerants and others, relating to the progress of the gospel in the county, and particularly in the districts to which the attention of the Union has been directed, in several of which much good has been done, and present appearances are considered to be very encouraging. Various resolutions were passed, and sums voted from the funds of the Union, for the support of itinerant preaching in the different parts of the county. In the evening, a sermon was preached, by the Rev. S. Ashton, of Stockport, from Exodus xxxvii. 23; and the interesting services of the meeting were closed, with the administration of the Lord's Supper. The next meeting will be held at Northwich, on the Wednesday and Thursday after the first Sabbath in April, 1822.

Congregational Union in Scotland.—The ministers who are about to visit London, as a deputation from this institution, will commence their labours on Lord's-day, the 7th instant, when Dr. Wardlaw will preach in the morning at Crown Court; in the afternoon at Stoke Newington; and in the evening at St. Thomas's Square, Hackney; and Mr. Henry, of Leith, (who, it is expected,

will accompany Dr. W., and not Messrs. Hercus and Dewar, as announced in our last number,) at Mr. Clark's Meeting-house, Chelsea, in the morning.

New Meeting-house at Highgate.—On Tuesday, Sept. 4, the foundation-stone of a new Meeting-house was laid in Southwood-lane, Highgate, for the use of the church and congregation under the pastoral care of the Rev. John Thomas. A large concourse of people were assembled on the interesting occasion. Solemn prayer was offered up by the Rev. E. J. Jones; Dr. Harris gave a very suitable address; and the Rev. Jn. Yockney concluded in prayer. The Rev. B. Rayson preached in the evening at the Meeting-house, from Exodus xxv. 2 and 8. Contributions towards this object will be thankfully received by the Rev. John Thomas.

Discovery of some interesting Protestants in the Interior of France.

[The following account is attested in the Evangelical Magazine by the Rev. Mark Wilks.]

M. —, a merchant at the head of one of the first commercial houses in Paris, had lately occasion to visit the manufactories established in the mountainous tracts of the Departments of the Loire and of the Puy de Dôme. The road that conducted him back to Lyons traversed a country rich in natural productions, and glowing with all the charms of an advanced and promising spring. The nearer view was unusually diversified; not only by the fantastic forms of mountains, the uncertain course of small and tributary streams, and the varying hues of fields of pasture, corn, vines, and vegetables; but by the combinations and contrasts of nature and of art, and the occupations of rural and commercial industry. Factories and furnaces were seen rising amidst burns and *bergeries*—peasants were digging and, ploughs gliding amidst forges and foundries of fire-arms—verdant slopes and graceful clumps were scattered amidst the black and ugly mouths of exhausted coal-pits, and the gentle murmur of the rill was subdued by the loud rattle of the loom. Sometimes M. —, and his friend, halted amidst all that is delightful and soothing; and, after a short advance, found themselves amidst barrenness, deformity, and confusion. The remoter scenery was not less impressive. Behind them were the rugged mountains of Puy de Dôme; the lofty Tavaré lifted its majestic head beside them, and far before appeared the brilliant summit of Mont Blanc.

Though engaged in great mercantile enterprises, and returning from a visit which was to give employment to hun-

dreds of families in the districts he was about to quit, M. —— felt powerfully the effects of the objects that pressed upon his sight; his thoughts were abstracted from the immediate end of his journey, and he was insensibly disposed for serious contemplation and religious sentiment.

In this state of mind he arrived at the skirts of a hamlet, placed on the declivity of a mountain; and being desirous of finding a shorter and more retired track, he stopped at a little house to inquire the way. From the windows, several females were watching the movements of a little child; and, just as M. —— inquired for a road across the mountains, the infant was in danger of being crushed by a coal-cart which had entered the street. The cries and alarms of the females were met by the activity of the travellers, and the companion of M. —— set off to snatch the infant from danger, and place him in security. An elderly female, from the second story, gave M. ——, who was still on his horse, the directions he desired; and, at the same time, expressed her uneasiness that the gentleman should have had the trouble to seek the child. "Madam, (interrupted M. ——,) my friend is only performing his duty: we ought to do to another as we would that another should do to us; and, in this wretched world, we are bound to assist each other. You are kind enough to direct us travellers in the right road, and surely the least we can do is to rescue your child from danger. The Holy Scriptures teach us these duties, and the Gospel presents us the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were in ignorance and danger, came to our world to seek and to save that which was lost." "Ah! Sir, (replied the good woman,) you are very condescending, and what you say is very true; but your language surprises me: it is so many years since in this village we have heard such truths, and especially from the lips of a stranger." "Madam, (resumed M. ——,) we are all strangers here, and sojourners bound to eternity: there is but one road, one guide, one Saviour, who can conduct us safely; if we feel this, young or old, rich or poor, we are all one in Christ; and, however scattered on earth, shall all arrive at the heavenly city, to which he is gone to prepare mansions for us." "These doctrines, Sir, (exclaimed the female,) support the hearts of many of us, who have scarcely travelled beyond our own commune; and it is so rare and so delightful to hear them from others, that, if it will not be an abuse of your Christian politeness, I would request you to alight and to visit my humble

apartment." "I shall comply most cheerfully with your request, (replied M. ——,) for though time is precious, I shall be thankful to spend a few minutes in these mountains, among those with whom I hope to dwell for ever on Mount Zion." My friend M. —— mounted to the second story, followed by his companion. He found the female with whom he had conversed, surrounded by her daughters and her grand-daughters, all busily employed in five looms, filled with galoons and ribbons, destined for the capital and the most distant cities of the world. The good widow was between 60 and 70 years of age; her appearance was neat and clean: and all the arrangements of her apartment, bespoke industry, frugality, and piety. "Ah! Sir, (she exclaimed, as M. —— entered,) how happy am I to receive such a visitor!" "Madam, (replied M. ——,) I am not worthy to enter under this roof" "Why, Sir, (exclaimed the widow,) you talked to us of Jesus Christ, and—" "Yes, Madam; but I am a poor guilty sinner, and hope only for salvation through the cross. I was yesterday at St. ——, where they were planting a cross with great ceremony: were you there?" "No, Sir; for it is of little use to erect crosses in the streets, if we do not carry the cross in our hearts, and are not crucified to the world. But, Sir, if you will not be offended, may I ask what you are called?" M. ——, pretending to give a general sense to the French phraseology, answered, "My name, Madam, is ——." "Thank you, Sir, I shall not forget; but this is not what I meant: I wished to know whether you are Protestant or Catholic, a pastor or a priest?" "Madam, I have not the honour to be either; I am a merchant: I desire to be a Christian, and to have no other title but a disciple of Christ." "That is exactly as we are here, Sir, (exclaimed the good widow, and added,) but, as you are so frank, are you, Sir, Catholic or Protestant?" "Catholic," replied M. ——. Madam looked confused, and observed, "That it was rare for the Catholics to talk as her visitor had done." "I am a Catholic, (resumed M. ——,) but not a member of the *Roman* Catholic Church. I love all that love our Lord Jesus in sincerity. I do not ask in what fold they feed, so that they are guided and nourished by the good Shepherd and Bishop of souls." "O what a favour the Lord has granted us to meet with a Christian like ourselves, (said the affected widow, looking round her,) we desire to live in charity with all mankind. But, to be frank also, Sir, we do not go to mass, nor to

confession, nor yet to church; for we do not learn from our Testament, which indeed is almost worn out, that we are required to confess to sinners like ourselves, nor to worship the host, nor to perform penance for the salvation of our souls; and, we believe, we can serve God as acceptably on a mountain, or in a chamber, or in a cave, as in the finest church." "I confess, Madam, in my turn, (said M. —,) that I am exceedingly astonished to find such persons on such a spot; pray how many may there be of your sentiments?" "Here, Sir, and scattered over the mountains, there are from 3 to 400. We meet on the Sunday evenings, and as often as we can, to pray to Jesus, to read the Testament, and to converse about the salvation of our souls. We are so much persecuted by the clergy, that we cannot appear as publicly as we wish. We are called *beguines* and fools; but we can bear this, and, I hope, a great deal more, for Him who has suffered so much for us."

While the conversation, of which this is a sketch, transpired, the room had filled, the neighbours had been informed and introduced, at the request of the worthy hostess; and as many as could quit their occupations, pressed to hear of the things of the kingdom of God. M. — desired to see the New Testament. It was presented. The title page was gone, the leaves were almost worn to shreds by the hard fingers of the weavers and labourers, and M. — could not discover the edition. A female, of respectable appearance, approached M. —, and said, Sir, for several years I have sought every where a New Testament, and I have offered any price for one, in all the neighbouring communes, but in vain. Could you, Sir, possibly procure me a copy, I will gladly pay any sum you demand—" "Madam, I will not only procure you one, (replied M. —, eagerly,) but in forty-eight hours I will send you half a dozen." "Is it possible? (exclaimed the astonished villagers.) May we, Sir, believe the good news? May we rely on your promise? It appears too great, too good—we will pay for them now, Sir, if you please." "You may depend on receiving them, (said M. —,) if God prolongs my life. But I entreat you to do me the favour to accept them, as a proof of my Christian regard, and an expression of my gratitude, for having been permitted to enjoy, in this unpromising spot, the refreshing company of the followers of Christ." The conversation then turned on the value of the sacred volume, and the sinfulness of those who withheld it from perishing and dejected sinners. After some time, the hostess interrupted the

chain, by demanding, "Pray, Sir, can you tell us if any thing extraordinary is passing in the world? We are shut out from all intercourse; but we have an impression that God is commencing a great work in the earth, and that wonderful events are coming to pass." "Great events have taken place, and news is arriving every day, (said M. —,) from all parts of the world, of the progress of the Gospel, and the fulfilments of the promises of the Holy Scriptures." He then gave to his attentive and enraptured auditory, an outline of the moral changes accomplished by the diffusion of the Bible, the labours of Missionaries, and the establishment of schools; but only such an outline as was suited to their general ignorance of the state of what is called the religious world. And when he had concluded, they all joined in the prayer—"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven."

Anxious as was M. — to pursue his journey, he devoted three hours to this interview. He exhorted them to receive and practice only what they found in the Scriptures, to cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart, and promised to use his influence to obtain for them a pastor, who should feed them with knowledge and understanding. The termination of this extraordinary meeting was procrastinated and affecting; tears of pleasure, gratitude, and regret, streamed from the eyes of the mountaineers; and the traveller, though more deeply moved by having seen the grace of God, than by all the scenes through which he had passed, went on his way rejoicing, and following the directions of the good widow, he arrived at the town of S. In this town he had commercial relations with the principal inhabitants and authorities, and under the impression of all he had witnessed, he inquired, as if with the curiosity of a traveller, the name of the hamlet he had passed on the mountain, and the nature of the employment and the character of its inhabitants. The men, said the Mayor, work in the mines, drive the teams, and labour in the fields; and the women and children weave. They are a very curious people, *outres illuminés*, but the most honest work-people of the country. Probity itself;—we have no occasion to weigh our silk, either when we give it out or take it in, for we are sure not to lose the value of an obole, and the kindest creatures in the world; they will take their shirts off their backs to give to any one in distress; indeed, there is no wretchedness among them, for though poor, they are industrious, temperate, charitable, and always assist each other; but touch them on their

religion, and they are almost idiots. They never go to mass, nor confession, in fact they are not Christians, though the most worthy people in the world,—and so droll,—imagine those poor people, after working all the week, instead of enjoying the Sunday and going to fêtes and balls to amuse themselves, they meet in each other's houses, and sometimes in the mountains, to read some book, and pray and sing hymns. They are very clever work-people, but they pass their Sundays and holidays stupidly enough. This testimony, so honourable to his new acquaintance, was confirmed to M. —— from several quarters; and he learnt from others, what he had not been told by themselves, that besides their honesty and charity, so great is their zeal, that they flock from the different hamlets, and meet in the mountains in cold and bad weather, at 8 or 9 o'clock at night, to avoid the interruption of their priestly enemies, and to sing and pray.

These accounts were not calculated to lessen the interest excited in the breast of M. ——, and immediately on his arrival at Lyons, he despatched six copies of the New Testament, and some copies of a tract, entitled, "*Les Deux Viellards*," written by M. Nolan, of Geneva. Shortly after his return to Paris, M. —— received, through one of his correspondents of Lyons, a letter from the excellent widow with whom he had conversed from the window of the second story. The modesty, dignity, and piety of the composition, has induced me to subjoin a literal translation, not only to evince the influence of true religion, but to satisfy the reader, that in this narration, no exaggerated statement has been made of the characters of the mountaineers of St. ——.

"Sir, I have the honour to write you, to assure you of my very humble respects, and at the same time to acknowledge the reception of the six copies of the New Testament, which you had the goodness and the generosity to send us. My family, myself, and my neighbours, know not how adequately to express their sincere gratitude; for we have nothing in the world so precious as that sacred volume, which is the best food of our souls, and our certain guide to the heavenly Jerusalem.

"As we believe and are assured that the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ could alone have inspired you with the desire to distribute the Sacred Scriptures to those who are disposed to make a holy use of them, we hope and believe that the Divine Saviour will be himself your recompence; and that he will give to you, as well as to all of us, the grace to understand, and to seek a part in his second coming; for this

ought to be our only and constant desire in the times of darkness and tribulation in which we live.

"It is with this view, Sir, that I entreat you to have the goodness to send six more copies of the sacred volume for several of my friends, who are delighted, not only with the beauty of the type, but especially with the purity of the edition: for it is sufficient to see the name of Monsieur le Maître de Sacey, to be assured that this edition is strictly conformable to the sacred text. Sir, as the persons who have charged me to entreat you to send six more copies of the New Testament would be sorry to abuse your generosity, they also charge me to say, that if you accomplish their wishes, as your truly Christian kindness induces them to hope, and will mark the price on the books, they shall feel it to be a pleasure and a duty to remit you the amount when I acknowledge the arrival of the parcel. Could you also add six copies of the little tract, entitled, "*Les Deux Viellards*."

"I entreat you, Sir, to excuse the liberty I have taken, and to believe that, while life remains, I am, in the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Your very humble servant,

The WIDOW ——."

M. —— hastened to gratify and exceed the wishes expressed in this letter. Instead of six copies, twenty copies of the New Testament were now presented to the widow and her friends, and a dozen instead of six of the *Deux Viellards*. The parcel was enlarged with copies of the *Archives du Christianisme*, The *Report of the Bible Society of Paris*, The *History of Missions*, lately published by M. Gaussen, of Sartigny, the French edition of the *Report of the London Missionary Society*, Dr. Bogue's *Essay on the New Testament*, The *Young Cottager*, of which a French Edition has been published, at the expense of a young gentleman of Paris, The *Sermons of Nardin*, which I have reprinted, The *Dairymen's Daughter*, the French translation, published in London, my *last* copy, and also my *only* remaining copy of Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*, in French. We wait for their correspondence to inform us of the impression produced by the arrival of such an unexpected supply. Among those who may read this account, I hope there may be some who will resolve that we shall not want funds to reprint, immediately, a large edition of Doddridge, of the *Dairymen's Daughter*, and other books and tracts which are exceedingly wanted, thankfully received, and extensively useful.

LITERARY NOTICES.

The Editors will feel obliged to Literary Gentlemen and Publishers, for the communication of Notices (Post paid) suited to this Department of the CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

WORKS PREPARING FOR THE PRESS.

The Rev. James Tawney has in the press, in three octavo volumes, an Introduction to the Literary and Ecclesiastical History of the Sacred Scriptures, and the Translations of them into different languages.

Dr. Wardlaw, of Glasgow, has in the press, Lectures on the Book of Ecclesiastes, in two octavo volumes.

The Rev. Dr. Cracknell will soon publish an Essay on the Dying Confessions of Judas Iscariot; a convincing Evidence of the Divine Origin of Christianity.

In the press, and in the course of next month will be published, a Sermon on Christian Unity. By the Rev. Thomas Young, of Margate.

In the press, Memoirs of Miss Mary Ann Burton, late of Kentish Town. 12mo. 6s. boards.

WORKS RECENTLY PUBLISHED.

The Whole Works of the Rev. John Newton. A new edition, in 12 vols. 12mo. price £2. 8s. in boards.

Lily Douglas; a simple story, humbly intended as a pattern for Sabbath Schools. Third Edition. Price 1s. 6d.

The Catechist; a fragment. Part I. Price 6d. Containing a Parable of the unjust Steward.—Part II. Parable of the Marriage Feast and Wedding Garment; by the Author of Lily Douglas. Second edition. Price 1s. 6d.

The Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns. By Thomas Chalmers, D. D.

Minister of St. John's Church, Glasgow. Vol. 1. Price 8s. 6d. boards.

The Koran; commonly called the Ale-ran of Mahomet. Translated from the original Arabic, with explanatory Notes taken from the most approved Commentators. To which is prefixed, a Preliminary Discourse, by George Sale, Gent. A new edition, in two volumes, 8vo. Price £1. 4s. boards.

Scripture Antiquities; or a Compendious Summary of the Religious Institutions, Customs, and Manners of the Hebrew Nation; compiled from the most authentic sources, and designed as an introductory help for the better understanding of the Sacred Scriptures. By the Rev. John Jones, Curate of Waterbeach, near Cambridge. 12mo. Price 5s.

Memoranda; containing an imperfect Account of an interesting Meeting, which was lately held at Queen Street Chapel, Lincoln's Inn Fields; embellished with a plate, representing Prince Ratafia, as he appeared on the platform at the above Meeting.

The Great Period, or the time of actual Justification considered. By the Rev. Thomas Young. 6s. boards.

The Sunday School; a Poem, in Six Books. By Abraham Wainrough. 12mo. Price 3s. 6d.

Anecdotes, Religious, Moral, and Entertaining; alphabetically arranged, and interspersed with a variety of useful observations, selected by the late Rev. Charles Buck. A new edition, in three volumes, 12mo. Price 12s. boards.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS, &c.

COMMUNICATIONS have been received this month from the Rev. Messrs. J. O. Stokes—J. Thornton—Dr. Cracknell—W. Beal—W. Vint—J. Turner—W. Scott—John Thomas—John Carter.

Also from Messrs. A. Allam—J. E. Scott—A Constant Reader (proposing a query on the Decalogue)—O. O. O.—M. C. S.—Parastar—Philander—Andrew Burn—Eriphus—Independent—G. D. Whiting—E. R. Inquisitor—A Constant Reader (in reply to the Query on Oaths).

We shall be happy to see T.'s life of F. P. S.—A Query is proposed by a correspondent, on the propriety or impropriety of reading the Scriptures indiscriminately in public worship.—Another Querist wishes for a reply to the following inquiry: "Is the Decalogue considered the basis of moral science, and is love to God included in that science?"—Philander's letter will be inserted: his communications on other subjects will be acceptable.—Andrew Burn is thanked for his extract from Lavington, but, as we presume it is from the published Sermons, we scarcely think it desirable to occupy our Magazine with citations from an author so extensively read.

ERRATA in our last Number.

P. 450, col. 1, line 5 from bottom, *del* the comma after *parents*.

P. 451, col. 1, line 14 from bottom, *insert* a semicolon after *entire*.

P. 457, col. 1, line 24, for *that they may lament not*, read *not that they may lament*.

— col. 1, line 28, *del* the note of admiration, and *insert* a period.

— col. 2, line 21 from bottom, for *pastors*, read *pastor*.

— col. 2, line 19 from bottom, *del* the comma after *was*.